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USPC **74/490.05**; 901/25(73) Assignee: **SQUSE INC.**, Kyoto-shi, Kyoto (JP)(21) Appl. No.: **14/008,528**(22) PCT Filed: **Mar. 30, 2012**(86) PCT No.: **PCT/JP2012/058634**§ 371 (c)(1),
(2), (4) Date: **Sep. 27, 2013**(30) **Foreign Application Priority Data**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A joint unit pivotably coupled to a tip end part of a main arm member of a Scott Russell mechanism is pivoted in two ways. A Scott Russell mechanism device pivotably couples a main arm member and a sub arm member to each other, as well as it pivotably couples a joint unit to a tip end part of the main arm member. Moreover, by providing a pivot driving unit to the main arm member, as well as providing a fourth motor and a drive transmission mechanism unit to the sub arm member, the Scott Russell mechanism device can switch between pivoting the joint unit associatively a change of a coupling angle of the arm members and pivoting the joint unit by the drive of the fourth motor.

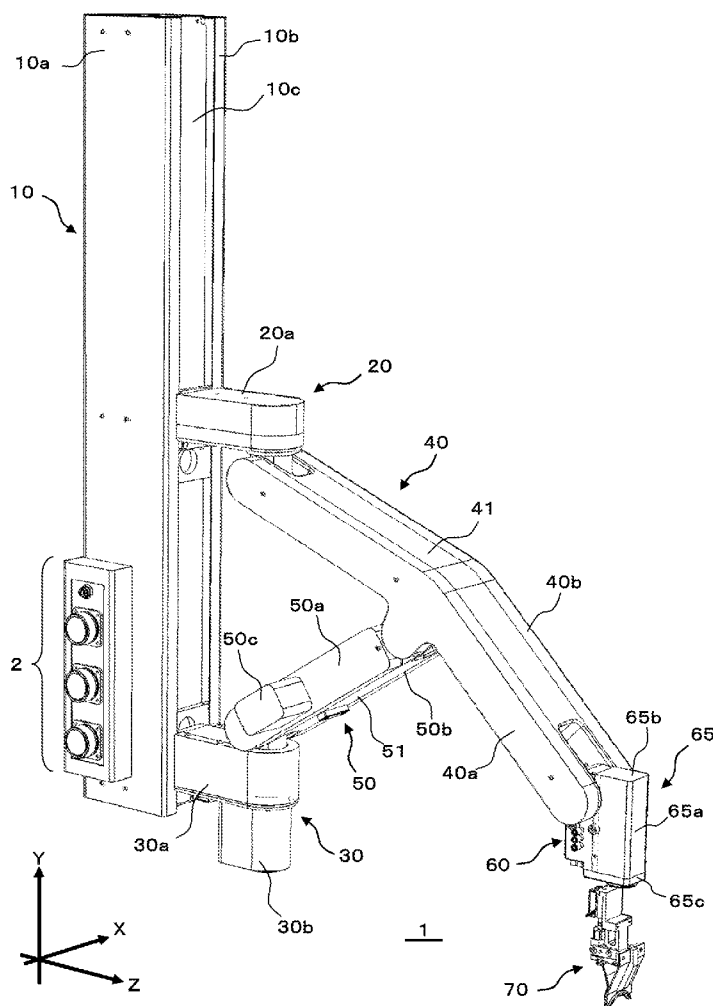


Fig. 1

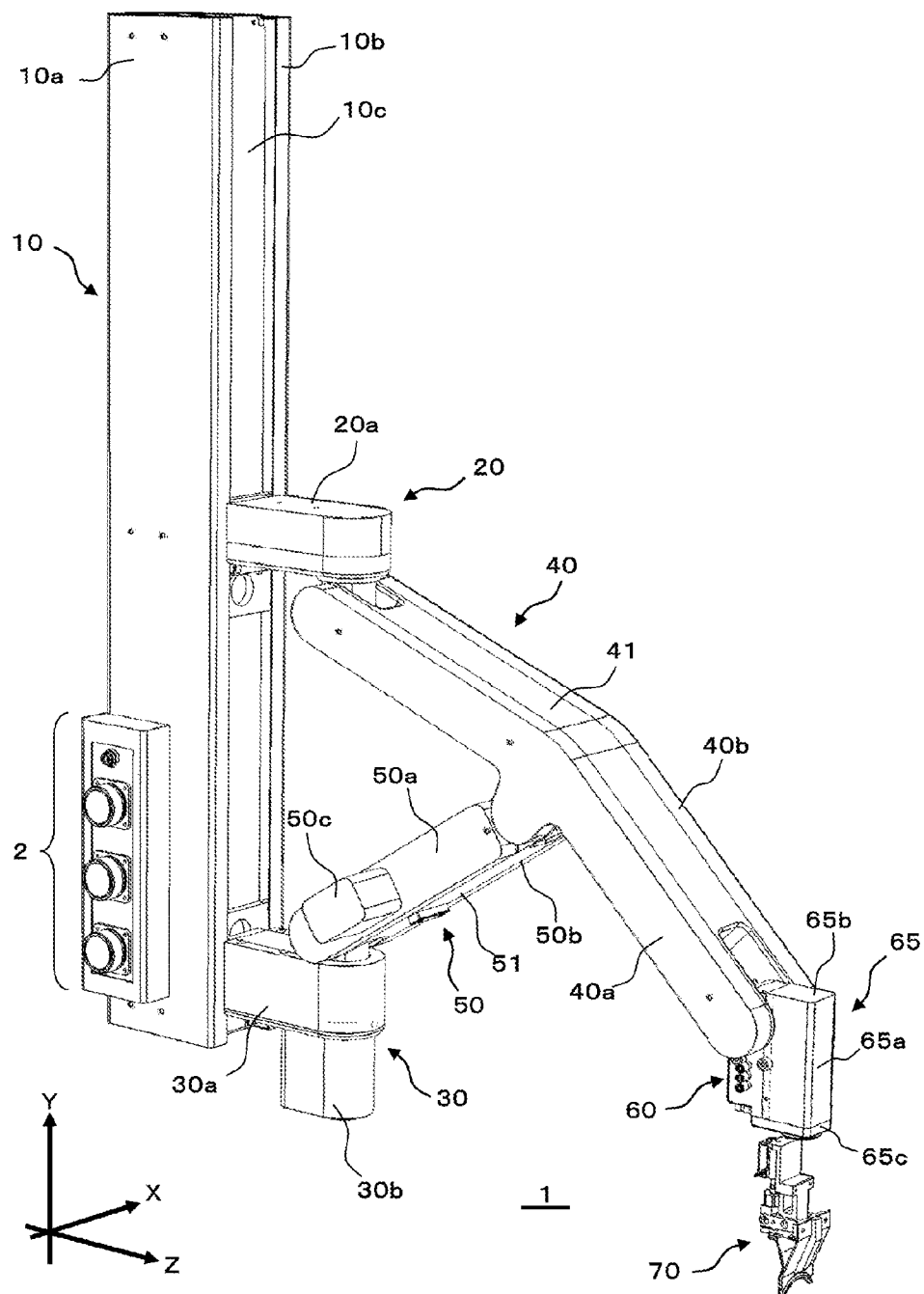


Fig. 2

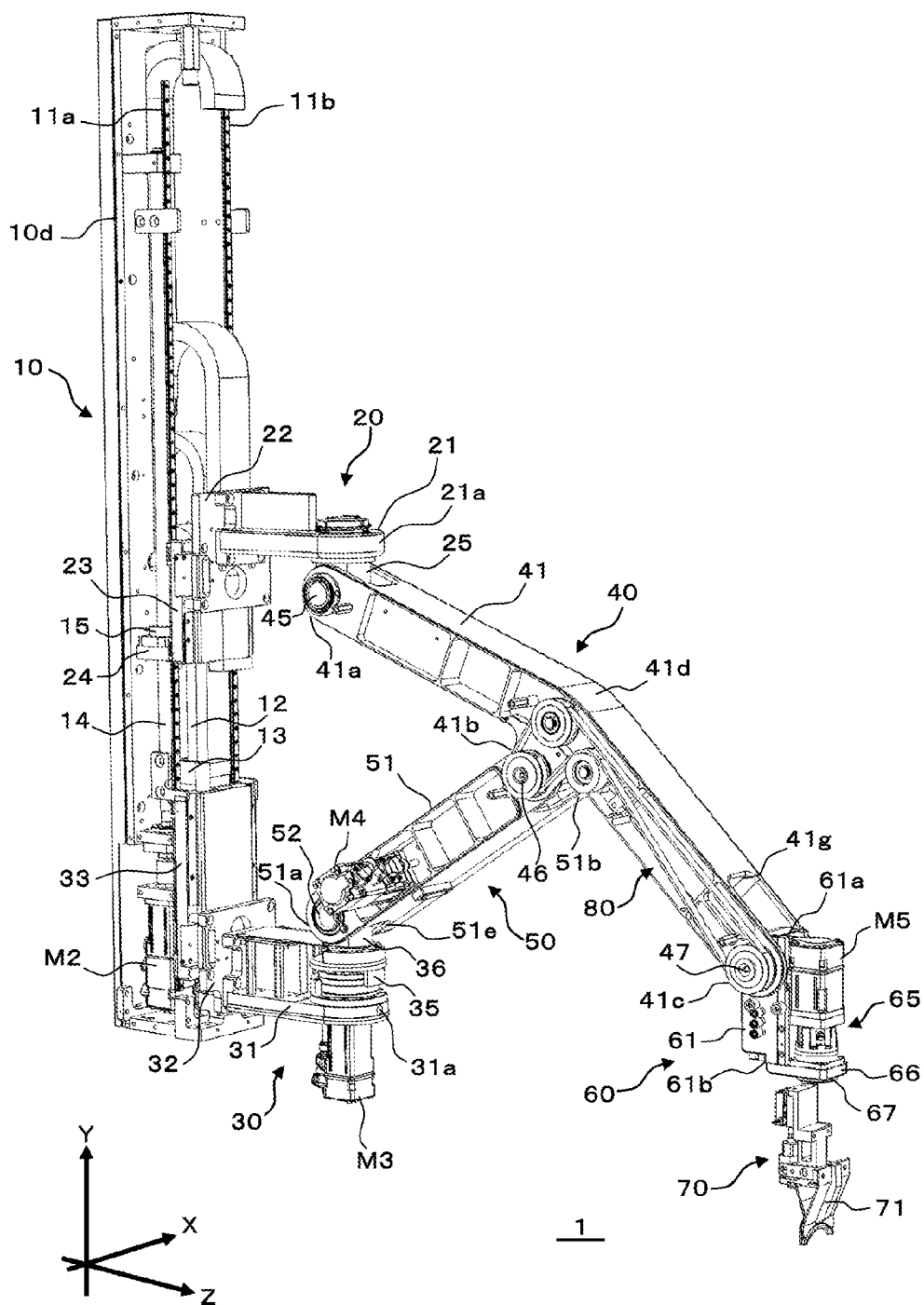
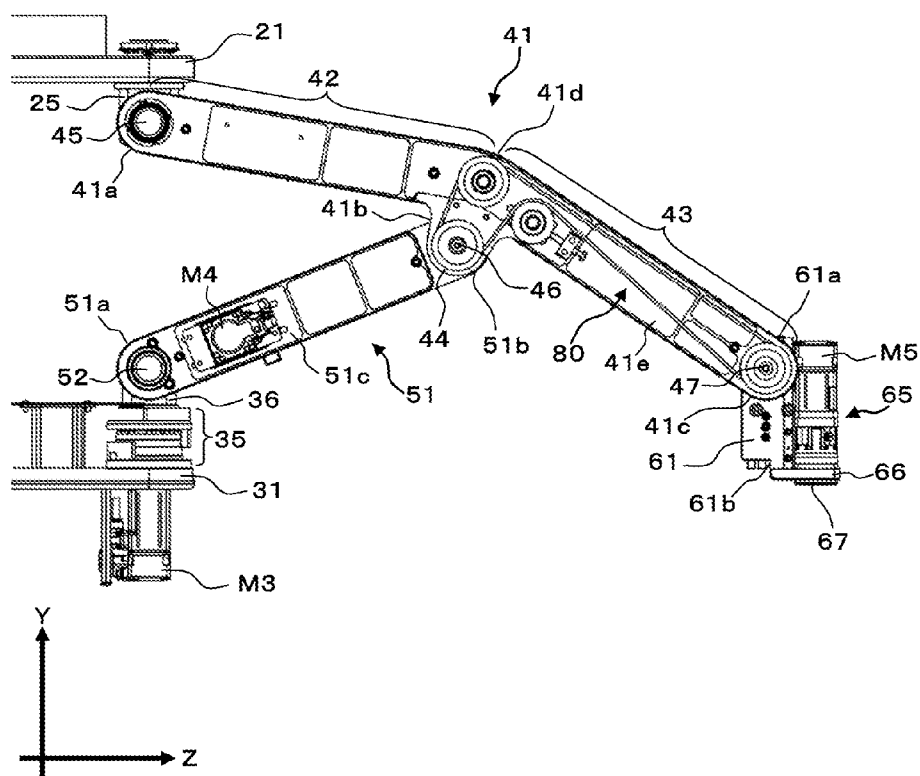


Fig. 3



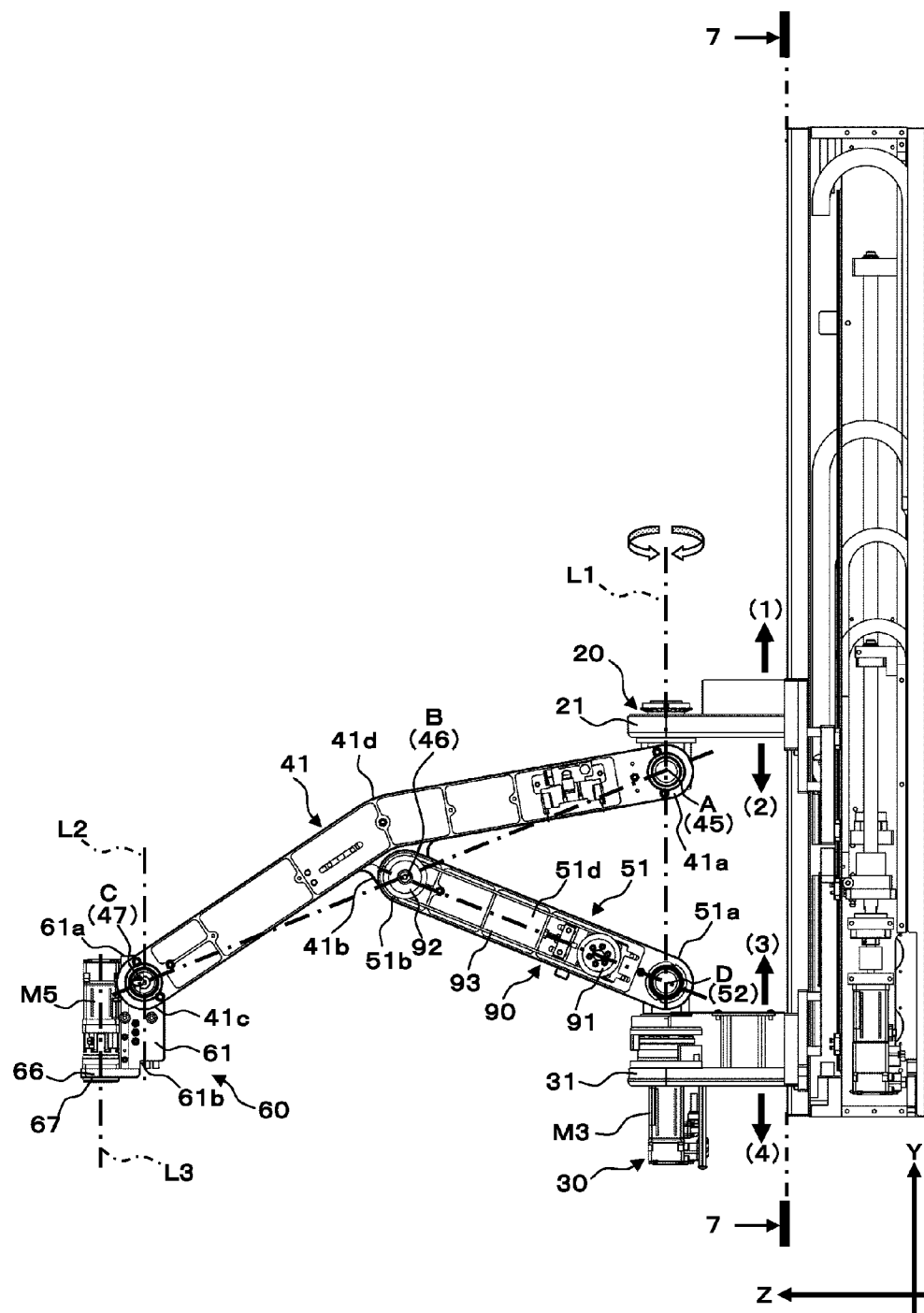


Fig. 5

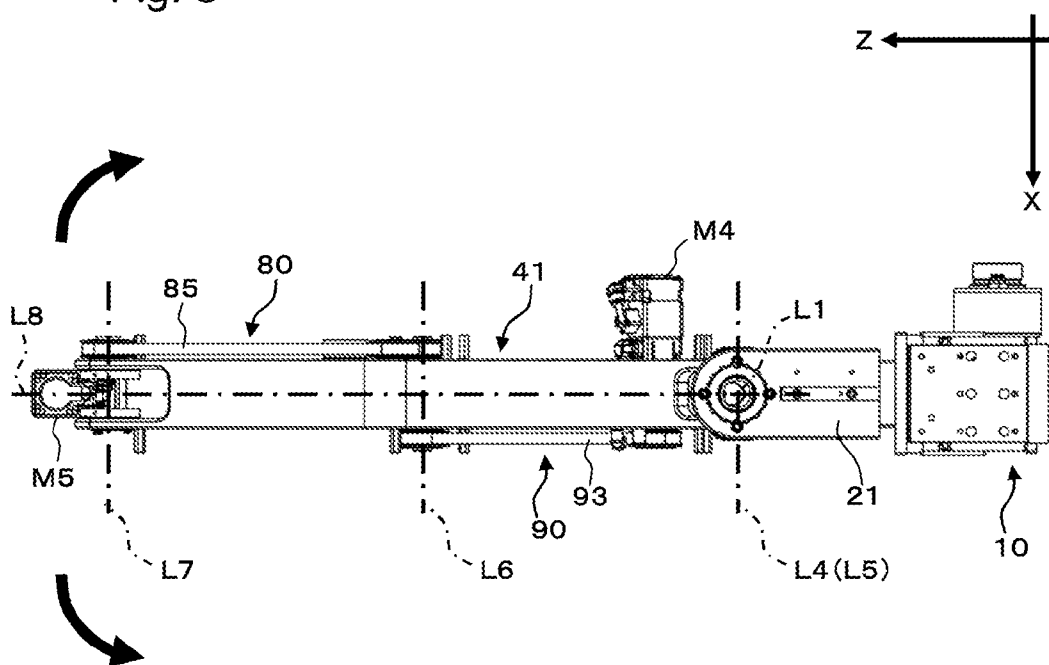


Fig. 6

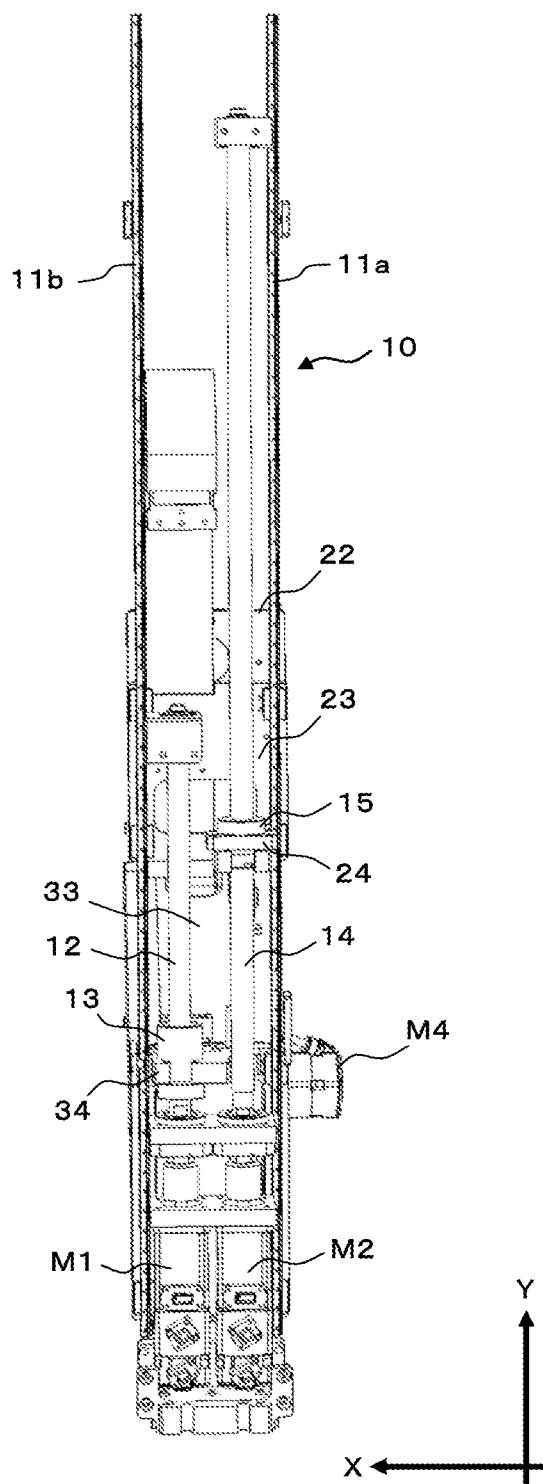


Fig. 7

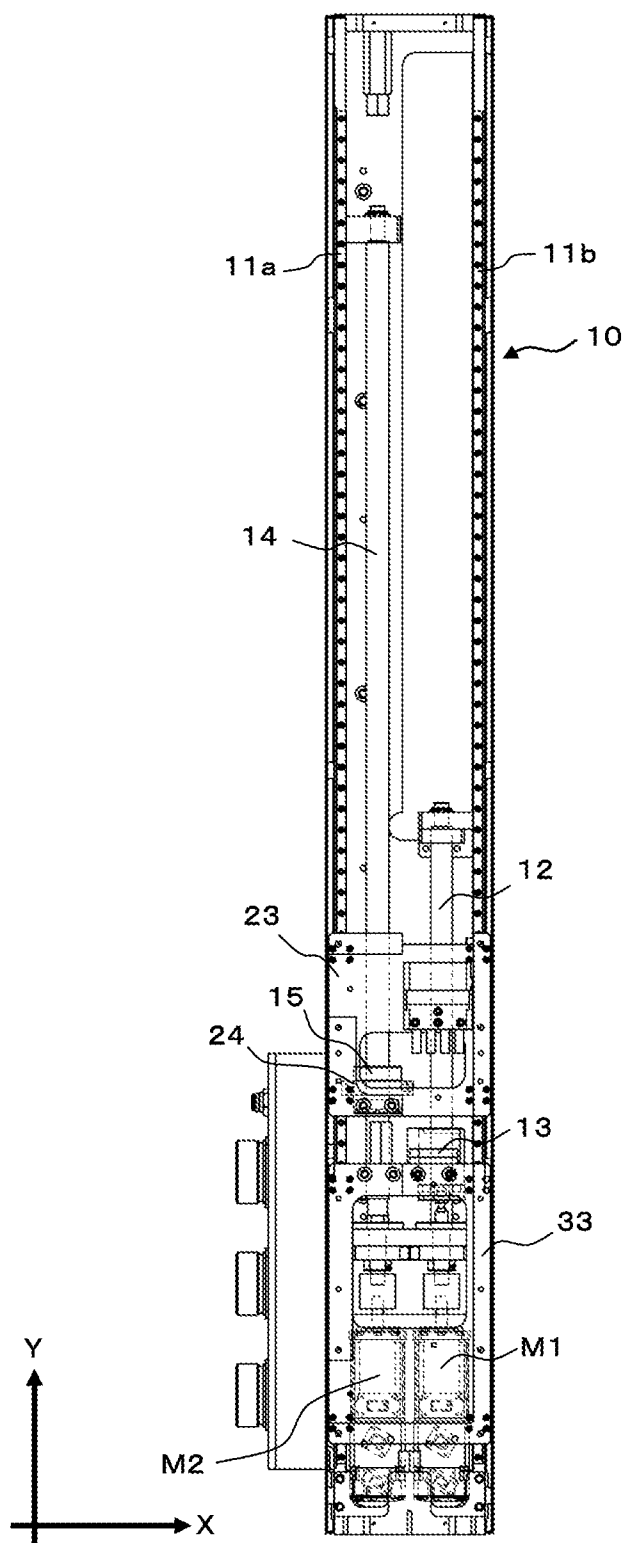


Fig. 8

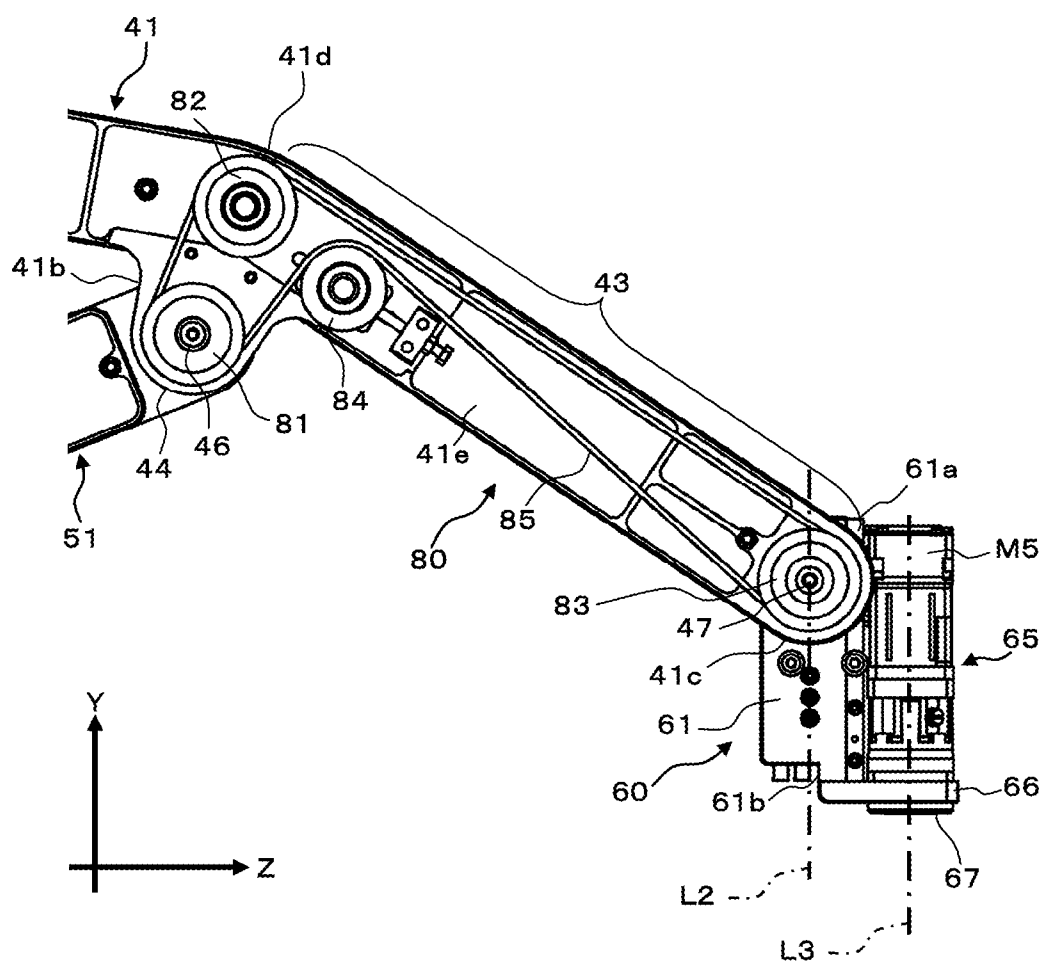


Fig. 9

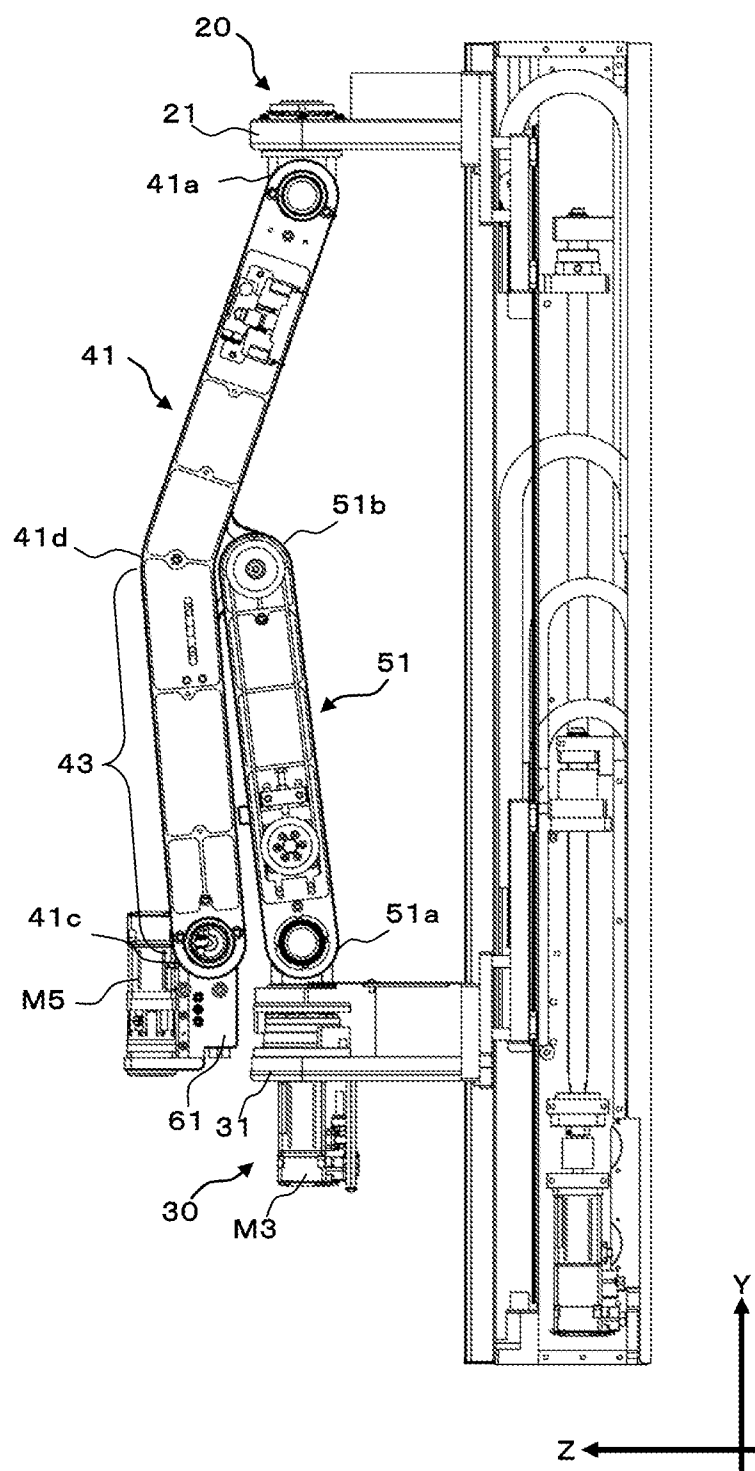


Fig. 10

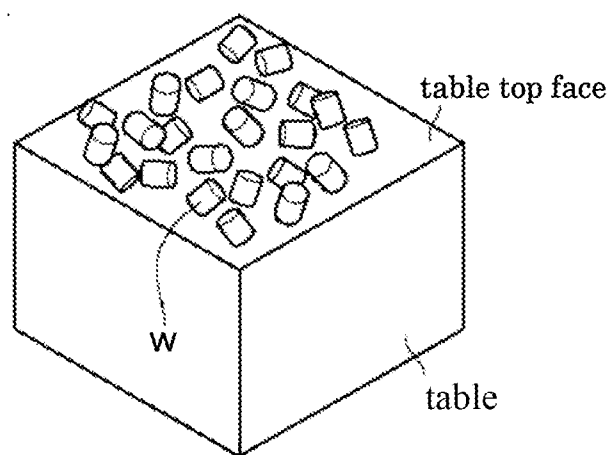


Fig. 11 (a)

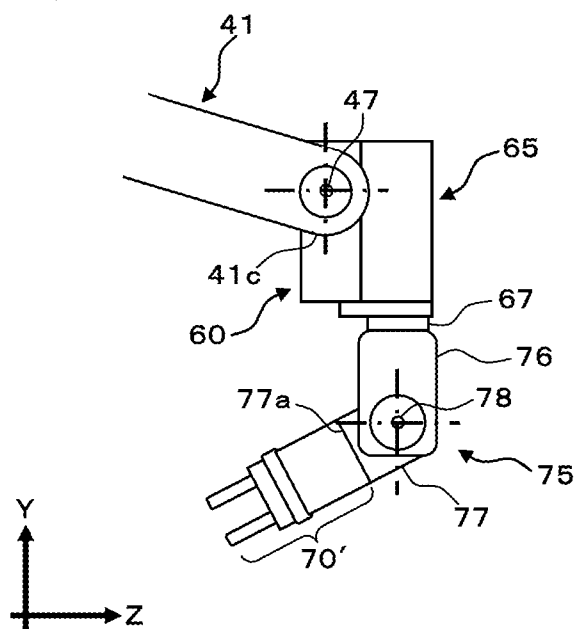


Fig. 11 (b)

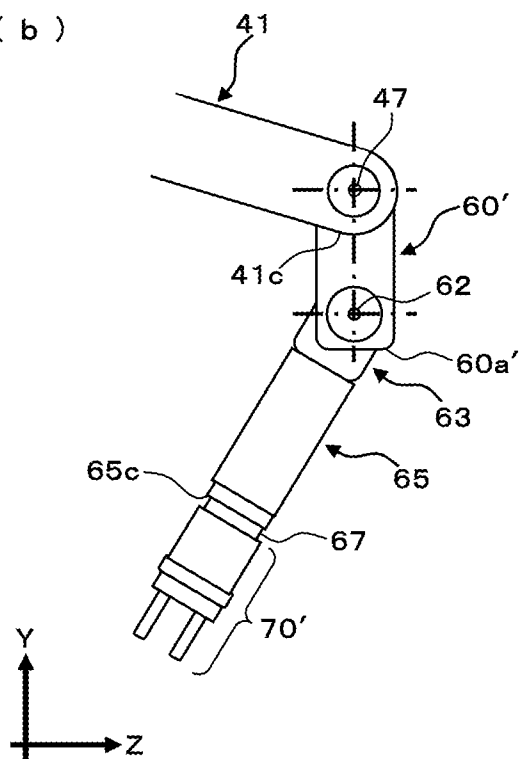


Fig. 12

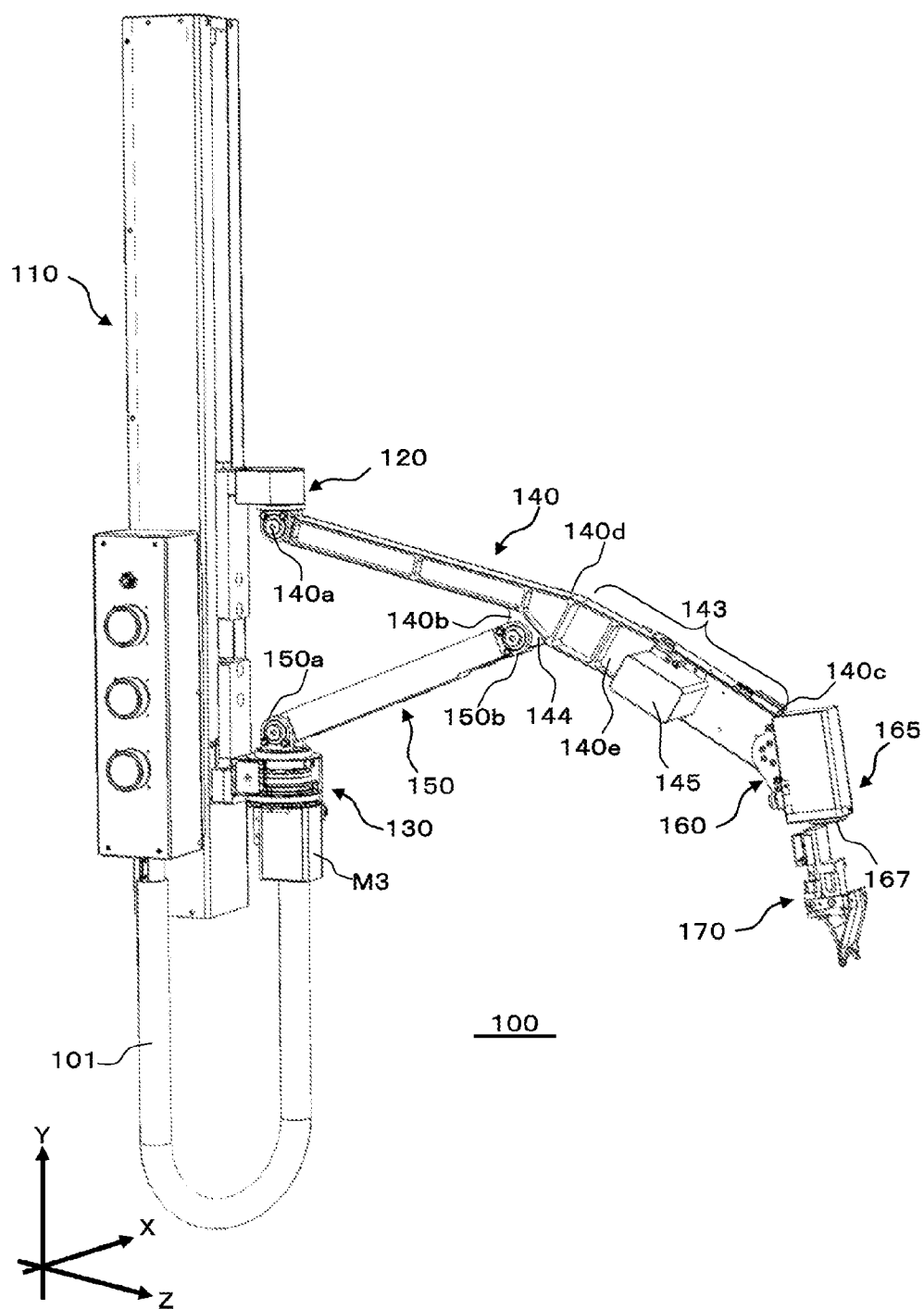


Fig. 13

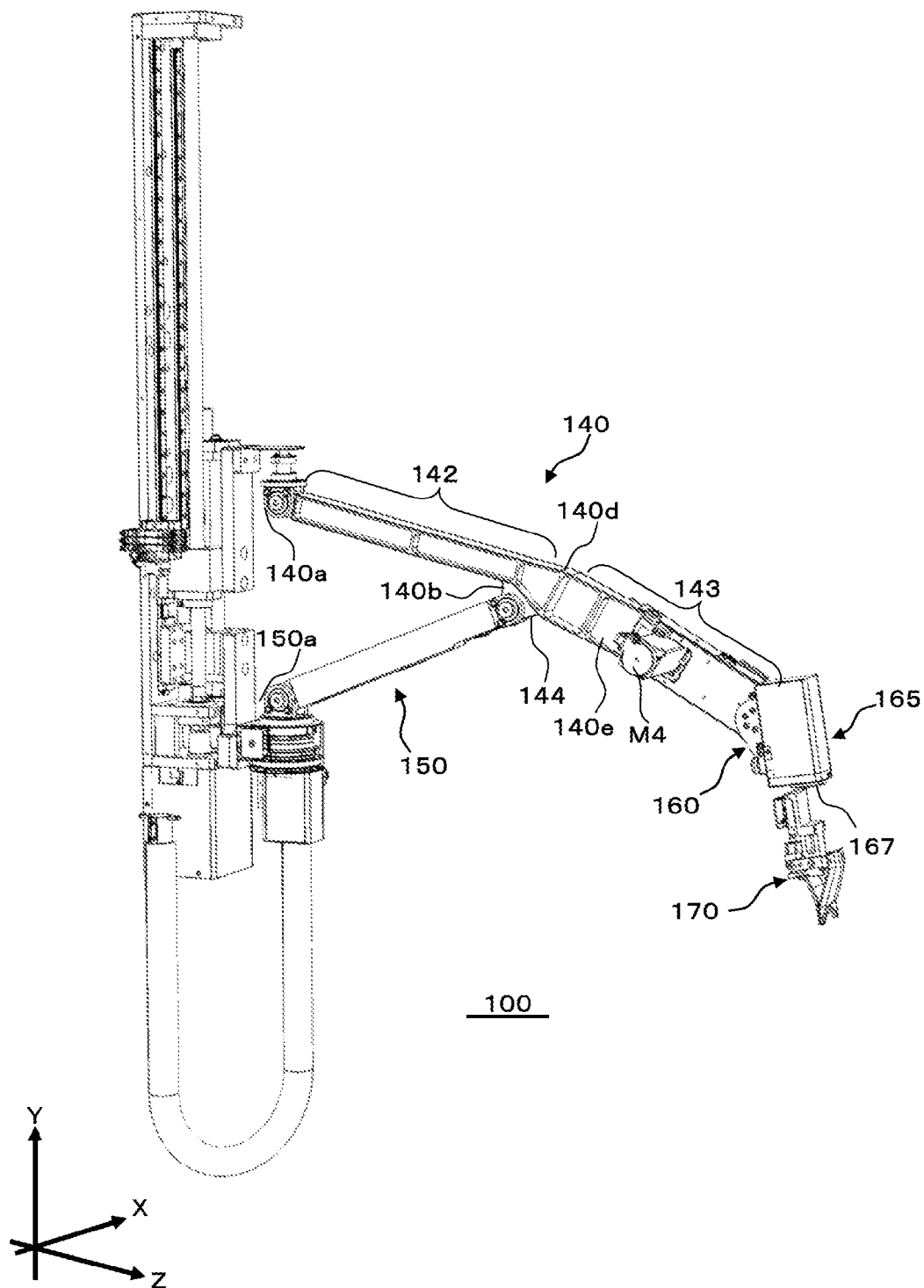


Fig. 14

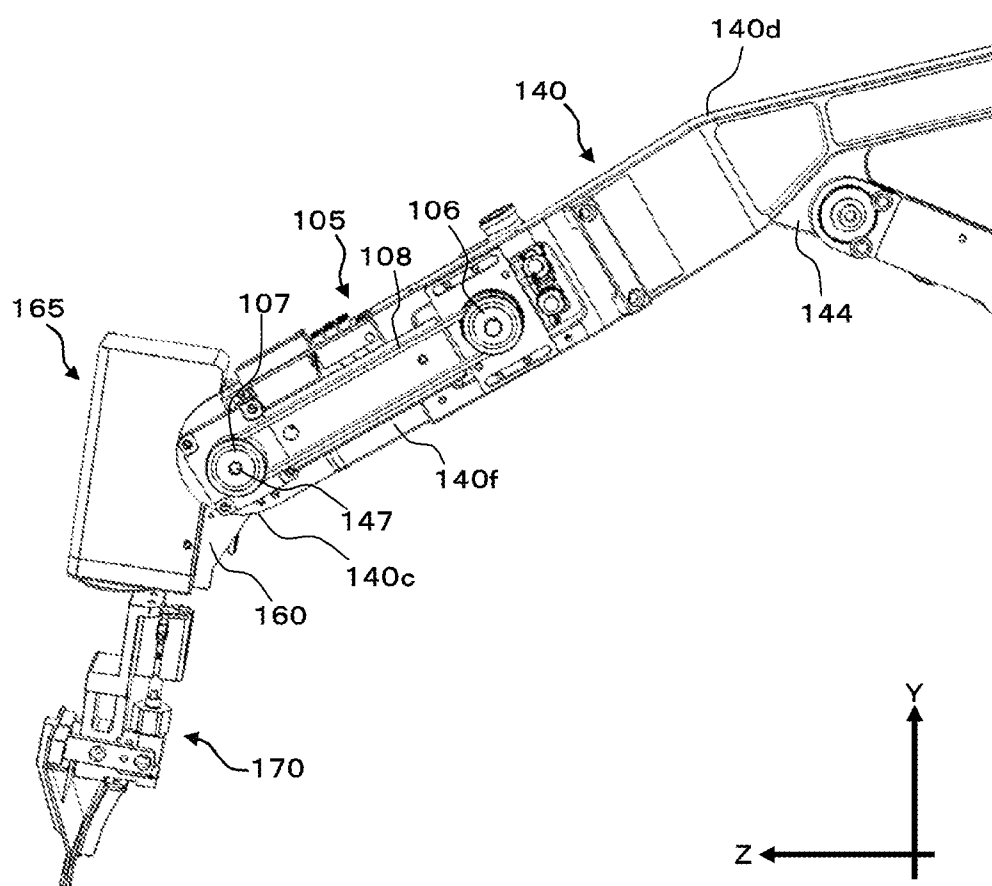


Fig. 15

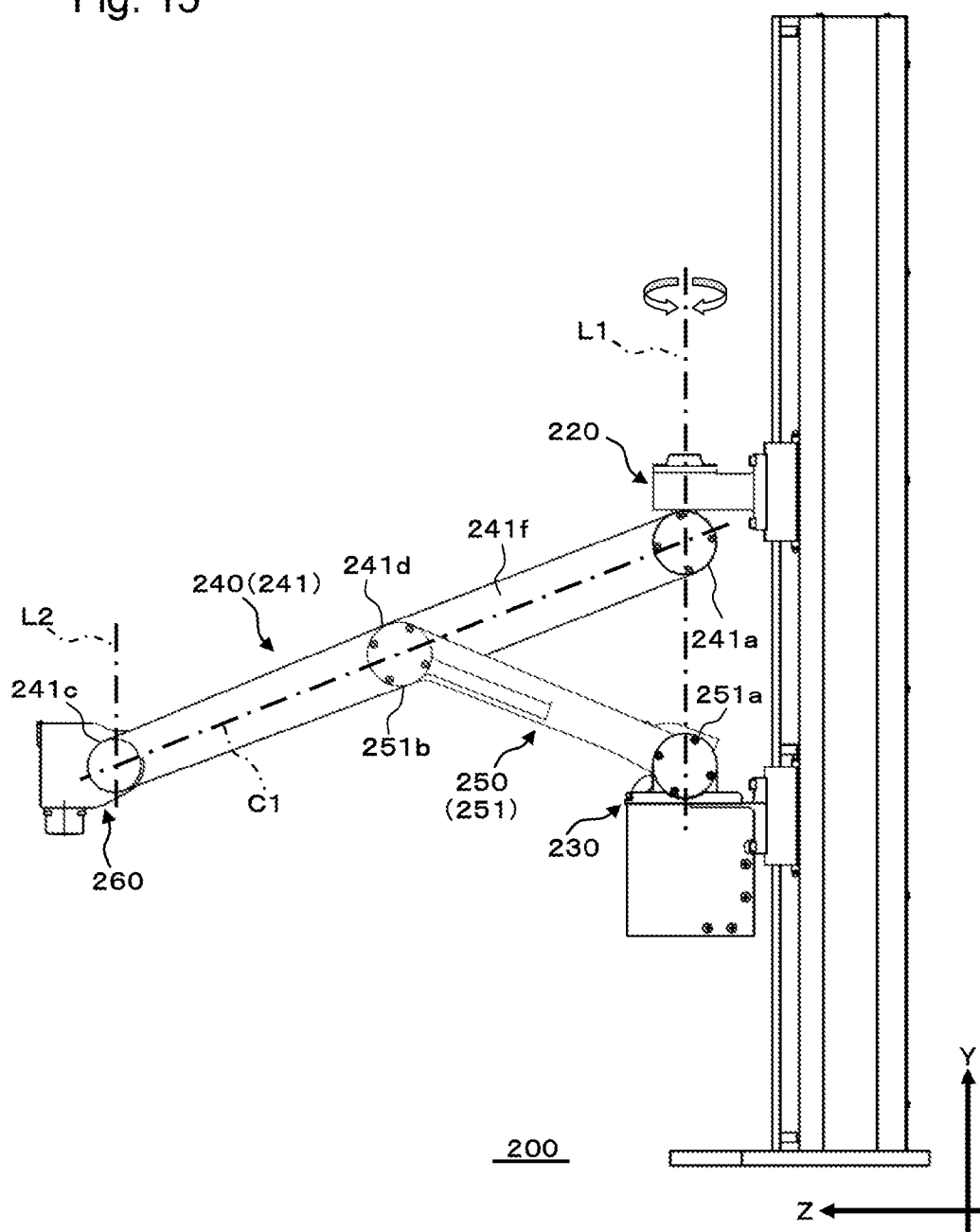
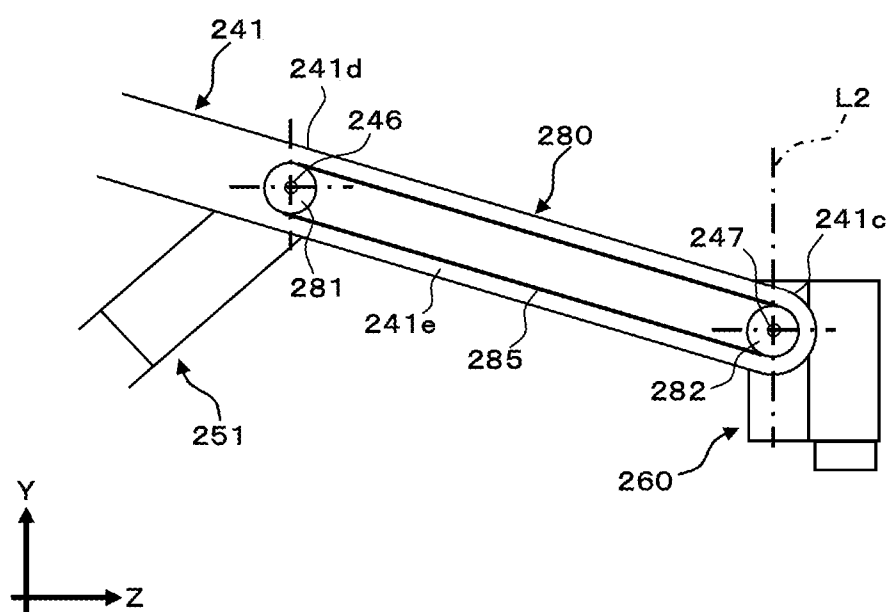


Fig. 16



SCOTT RUSSELL MECHANISM DEVICE

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0001] The present invention relates to a device applied with a Scott Russell mechanism where a main arm member and a sub arm member are coupled to each other and a coupling angle therebetween is changeable, and particularly relates to a Scott Russell mechanism device that can attach units to the tip end side of the main arm member and change postures of the units variously.

BACKGROUND ART

[0002] Conventionally, various kinds of devices using a Scott Russell mechanism exist. A Scott Russell mechanism is a mechanism where a linear main arm member is pivotably coupled to a sub arm member, a distance from a base end part of the main arm member to a coupling position thereof, a distance from the coupling position of the main arm member to a tip end part thereof, and a distance from a coupling position of the sub arm member to a base end part thereof are all equal to each other, and in a case where a coupling angle between both of the arm members is changed, the tip end part of the main arm member linearly moves along a straight line connecting the tip end part of the main arm member and the based end part of the sub arm member.

[0003] Patent Document 1 discloses a Scott Russell mechanism applied to a industrial robot. Further, Patent Document 2 discloses a Scott Russell mechanism applied to a positioning transport device. Moreover, Patent Document 3 discloses a Scott Russell mechanism applied to a drive structure of a feed arm. Furthermore, Patent Document 4 discloses a Scott Russell mechanism applied to an industrial robot. Further, Patent Document 5 discloses a Scott Russell mechanism in a modified example where the coupling between the main arm member and the sub arm member is in a crank shape, the Scott Russell mechanism applied to a transport device.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS OF CONVENTIONAL ART

Patent Documents

- [0004]** Patent Document 1: JP1983-155185A
- [0005]** Patent Document 2: JP2000-190259A
- [0006]** Patent Document 3: JP1995-187344A
- [0007]** Patent Document 4: JP1984-196181A
- [0008]** Patent Document 5: JP2009-208935A

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Problems to be Solved by the Invention

[0009] With the industrial robot according to Patent Document 1, both of the arm members are rotated (turned) about the screw shaft **21** as a rotation center (turning center), then all of the industrial robot including the screw shaft **21** is turned, and thus a problem arises that a drive torque for the turning increases.

[0010] Moreover, in each of the above-described patent documents, various kinds of units, such as the holder, the arm, and the hand, are attached to the tip end of the main arm member. Since the postures of these units on the tip end side depend on the direction (posture) of the tip end of the main arm member, a problem arises that a range in which the

postures of the units attached to the tip end of the main arm member can be changed is limited.

[0011] The present invention is made in view of the above situations, and aims to provide a Scott Russell mechanism device that allows a main arm member and a sub arm member to pivot at a base end part of both of the arm members to reduce a drive torque for turning both of the arm members, and to increase the degree of freedom in postures of various kinds of units attached to a tip end of the main arm member compared to the conventional degree.

Means for Solving the Problem

[0012] In order to solve the above problem, a Scott Russell mechanism device according to the present invention, a joint unit may be pivotably coupled to the tip end part of the main arm member. A pivoting axis of the pivot of the joint unit may be in parallel to an axis of the pivots of the main arm member and the sub arm member at the coupling position. The device may include a pivoting mechanism unit for automatically pivoting the joint unit cooperating with the angle change by the angle changer, a pivot driving unit for pivoting the joint unit via the pivoting mechanism unit independently from the angle change by the angle changer.

[0013] In the present invention, the joint unit pivotably coupled to the tip end part of the main arm member can be pivoted in the total of two kinds of manners including the pivot cooperating with the angle change between both of the arm members at the coupling position and the pivot independent to the angle change. Therefore, as for the application of the Scott Russell mechanism device according to the present invention, the posture of the joint unit can be changed in the total of two kinds of manners.

[0014] Furthermore, in the Scott Russell mechanism device according to the present invention, a rotation unit having a rotor may be coupled to the joint unit.

[0015] In the present invention, the rotation unit is coupled to the joint unit. Therefore, since the rotation unit has the rotor that is rotatable independently to the displacement of the tip end part of the main arm member, the degree of freedom of the posture of the rotor of the rotation unit provided to the tip end side of the main arm member improves. The application of the Scott Russell mechanism device according to the present invention expands by attaching various kinds of units corresponding to various applications to its rotor.

[0016] Moreover, in the Scott Russell mechanism device according to the present invention, a pivoting member may be pivotably coupled to the joint unit. An axis of the pivot of the pivoting member may be in parallel to the pivoting axis of the joint unit. A rotation unit having a rotor may be coupled to the pivoting member.

[0017] In the present invention, the pivoting member is pivotably coupled to the joint unit and the rotation unit having the rotor is coupled to the pivoting member. Therefore, the rotation unit attached to the joint unit via the pivoting member can displace its rotor independently of the displacement of the tip end part of the main arm member. Thus, the degree of posturing freedom of the rotor of the rotation unit positioned to the farthest tip end increases, and the application of the Scott Russell mechanism device according to the present invention further expands.

[0018] Further, in the Scott Russell mechanism device according to the present invention, a gripping unit may be attached to the rotor of the rotation unit.

[0019] In the present invention, the gripping unit is attached to the rotor of the rotation unit. Therefore, by the rotor of the rotation unit where the amount of the postural displacement is increased compared to the conventional device, the Scott Russell mechanism device according to the present invention can be applied to the application of performing the gripping while flexibly responding to the orientation of a workpiece as a gripping target.

[0020] Furthermore, in the Scott Russell mechanism device according to the present invention, a rotation unit having a rotor may be coupled to the joint unit. A pivoting unit having a pivoting part that is pivotable centering on an axis in parallel to the pivoting axis of the joint unit may be coupled to the rotor of the rotation unit.

[0021] In the present invention, the joint unit, the rotation unit, and the pivoting unit are coupled to each other in this order. Therefore, compared to the case of coupling the units in an order different from above, the pivoting unit positioned at the farthest tip end can perform the postural displacement in a different range.

[0022] Further, in the Scott Russell mechanism device according to the present invention, a gripping unit may be attached to a tip end side of the pivoting unit.

[0023] In the present invention, the gripping unit is attached to the tip end side of the pivoting unit. Therefore, the gripping unit can be pivoted proximally to the workpiece which is the gripping target, and the Scott Russell mechanism device including a gripping function suitable for such a gripping application can be provided.

[0024] Furthermore, in the Scott Russell mechanism device according to the present invention, a base end part of the main arm member and a base end part of the sub arm member that is on the opposite side from the coupling side of the sub arm member are positioned on the same virtual straight line. The main arm member and the sub arm member may be pivotable about the virtual straight line as a pivoting axis thereof. The angle changer may have a first ball screw arranged in parallel to the virtual straight line, and a first linearly-moving unit for being linearly moved by a rotation of the first ball screw. Either one of the base end part of the main arm member or the base end part of the sub arm member may be pivotably coupled to the first linearly-moving unit about the virtual straight line as the pivoting axis thereof. The device may include a pivoting drive source for driving the pivots of the main arm member and the sub arm member centering on the pivoting axis.

[0025] In the present invention, either one of the base end parts of both of the arm members is linearly moved by the rotation of the first ball screw, and the pivots (turnings) of both of the arm members are driven about the virtual straight line connecting the base end parts of both arm members therebetween as the pivoting axis thereof, resulting in only both of the arm members turning. Therefore, the first ball screw will be excluded from the turning targets, compared to the turnings of both of the arm members of the industrial robot relating to the reference document 1 described above, a drive torque caused by the turn is reduced, and both of the arm members can be turned smoothly.

[0026] Furthermore, in the Scott Russell mechanism device according to the present invention, the angle changer may also have a second ball screw arranged in parallel to the first ball screw, and a second linearly-moving unit for being linearly moved by a rotation of the second ball screw. Either one of the base end part of the sub arm member or the base end

part of the main arm member may be pivotably coupled to the second linearly-moving unit about the virtual straight line as the pivoting axis thereof.

[0027] In the present invention, the base end part of either one of the sub arm member or the main arm member is linearly movable by the second ball screw. Therefore, a plurality of variations can be provided to the method of moving the base end part of both of the arm members, resulting in being able to flexibly perform the moving of the tip end part of the main arm member. Specifically, the tip end part of the main arm member can be moved by only moving the base end part of the main arm member, by only moving the base end part of the sub arm member, or by moving both of the base end parts of both of the arm members, respectively. Further, when both of the base end parts of both of the arm members are moved in the same direction by the same amount, both of the arm members can be moved entirely while keeping their postures.

Effects of the Invention

[0028] In the present invention, the joint unit pivotably coupled to the tip end part of the main arm member can be pivoted in the total of two kinds of manners including the pivot cooperating with the angle change between both of the arm members at the coupling position and the pivot independent of the angle change. Therefore, the application of the Scott Russell mechanism device according to the present invention expands.

[0029] In the present invention, the rotation unit having the rotor is coupled to the joint unit. Therefore, since the rotor of the rotation unit can rotate independently of the displacement of the tip end part of the main arm member, the displacement amount of the rotor of the rotation unit coupled to the tip end side of the main arm member can be increased, and the application of the Scott Russell mechanism device according to the present invention further expands.

[0030] Moreover, in the present invention, pivoting member is pivotably coupled to the joint unit and the rotation unit having the rotor is coupled to the pivoting member. Therefore, the rotation unit attached to the joint unit via the pivoting member can displace its rotor independently of the amount of the displacement of the tip end part of the main arm member, and the postural displacement of the rotor positioned at the farthest tip end increases much more.

[0031] Further, in the present invention, the gripping unit is attached to the rotor of the rotation unit. Therefore, the gripping (chucking) flexibly responding to the orientation of a workpiece as a gripping target can be performed by the rotor of the rotation unit of which the amount of the postural displacement is increased, and the Scott Russell mechanism device according to the present invention can suitably be used for the gripping application.

[0032] In the present invention, the joint unit, the rotation unit, and the pivoting unit are coupled to each other in this order. Therefore, the rotation unit can perform the postural displacement in a different range from the case of coupling in an order different from the above, and the application of the Scott Russell mechanism device according to the present invention further expands.

[0033] Moreover, in the present invention, the gripping unit is attached to the tip end side of the pivoting unit. Therefore, the gripping unit can be pivoted proximally to the workpiece which is the gripping target, and the Scott Russell mechanism

device including a gripping function suitable for such a gripping application can be provided.

[0034] In the present invention, either one of the base end parts of both of the arm members is linearly moved by the rotation of the first ball screw, and the pivots (turnings) of both of the arm members are driven about the virtual straight line connecting the base end parts of both arm members therebetween as the pivoting axis thereof so as to turn only both of the arm members. Therefore, compared to the conventional device, a drive torque caused by the turning can be reduced, and both of the arm members can be turned smoothly.

[0035] Moreover, in the present invention, the base end part of either one of the sub arm member or the main arm member is linearly movable by the second ball screw. Therefore, a plurality of variations can be provided to the method of moving the base end part of both of the arm members, and the tip end part of the main arm member can move flexibly.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0036] FIG. 1 is a perspective view illustrating a Scott Russell mechanism device according to a first embodiment of the present invention.

[0037] FIG. 2 is a perspective view illustrating the Scott Russell mechanism device of the first embodiment in a state where covers covering an outer circumference of the Scott Russell mechanism device are removed.

[0038] FIG. 3 is a side view of a main arm member, a sub arm member and the like of the Scott Russell mechanism device seen from one direction.

[0039] FIG. 4 is a side view of the Scott Russell mechanism device seen from another direction.

[0040] FIG. 5 is a plan view of the Scott Russell mechanism device.

[0041] FIG. 6 is a rear view of a pillar unit of the Scott Russell mechanism device.

[0042] FIG. 7 is a front view of the pillar unit where a main part is seen from a line E-E of FIG. 4.

[0043] FIG. 8 is an enlarged view of a main part where a tip end part and the like of the main arm member are illustrated.

[0044] FIG. 9 is a side view of the Scott Russell mechanism device where a state in which base end parts of the main arm member and the sub arm member are separated from each other is illustrated.

[0045] FIG. 10 is a schematic view illustrating one example of workpieces as grip targets.

[0046] FIG. 11(a) is a schematic view illustrating each unit coupled to a tip end side of the main arm member of a modified example, and

[0047] FIG. 11(b) is a schematic view illustrating each unit according to another modified example.

[0048] FIG. 12 is a perspective view illustrating a Scott Russell mechanism device according to a second embodiment of the present invention.

[0049] FIG. 13 is a perspective view illustrating the Scott Russell mechanism device of the second embodiment in a state where covers covering an outer circumference of the Scott Russell mechanism device are removed.

[0050] FIG. 14 is a schematic view illustrating a tip end part and the like of a main arm member of the Scott Russell mechanism device of the second embodiment.

[0051] FIG. 15 is a side view of a Scott Russell mechanism device according to a third embodiment of the present invention seen from another direction.

[0052] FIG. 16 is an enlarged view of a main part where a tip end part, a pivoting mechanism part and the like of the main arm member according to the third embodiment are illustrated.

MODES FOR CARRYING OUT THE INVENTION

[0053] FIG. 1 illustrates a Scott Russell mechanism device 1 according to a first embodiment of the present invention. The Scott Russell mechanism device 1 of the first embodiment corresponds to a gripping application, and a gripping unit 70 is attached to a tip end of a main arm 40 that is pivotably coupled to a sub arm 50, via a joint unit 60 and a rotation unit 65. A pillar unit 10 extending in a vertical direction is provided to root end sides of the main arm 40 and the sub arm 50, and the pillar unit 10 includes a linearly-movable second slider 20 (corresponding to the second linearly-moving unit of the present invention) and a linearly-movable first slider 30 (corresponding to the first linearly-moving unit of the present invention). To these first and second sliders 20 and 30, the main arm 40 and the sub arm 50 are coupled on their root end sides (base end parts), respectively.

[0054] FIG. 1 illustrates an exterior appearance where various kinds of covers form an outer circumference of the Scott Russell mechanism device 1. As the outer circumferential covers, there are side face covers 10a and 10b and a front face side cover 10c of the pillar unit 10, a surrounding cover 20a of the second slider 20, a surrounding cover 30a of the first slider 30, a motor cover 30b of the first slider 30, side face covers 40a and 40b covering both side faces of a main arm member 41 of the main arm 40, side face covers 50a and 50b covering both side faces of a sub arm member 51 of the sub arm 50, a motor cover 50c of the sub arm 50, and a motor cover 65a of the rotation unit 65, etc. Moreover, the Scott Russell mechanism device 1 is provided with an external line connection part 2 having a total of three connectors, below the side face cover 10a which is one of the side face covers of the pillar unit 10. This external line connection part 2 includes a connector for power lines for driving motors (motors M1 to M5), a connector for detection lines relating to detections of motor rotation quantities (detection by rotary encoders built in the motors), and a connector for a control line of a drive valve of a pneumatic pressure cylinder included in the gripping unit 70.

[0055] Note that, a direction of the X-axis illustrated in FIG. 1 corresponds to a direction in parallel to a thickness direction of the pillar unit 10 (see FIGS. 5 to 7). Moreover, a direction of the Y-axis corresponds to a direction in parallel to a longitudinal direction of the pillar unit 10 and also is a direction orthogonal to the X-axis. Furthermore, a direction of the Z-axis corresponds to a direction in parallel to a width direction of the pillar unit 10 and also is a direction orthogonal to both of the X-axis and the Y-axis. The directions of the X-axis, the Y-axis, and the Z-axis are common in other drawings as well (FIG. 2 and thereafter).

[0056] FIG. 2 illustrates the Scott Russell mechanism device 1 in a state where the above-described various kinds of covers and the like illustrated in FIG. 1 are removed and the internal configuration is illustrated (FIG. 3 and thereafter also illustrate the state where the various kinds of covers and the like are removed, note that, in FIGS. 3 to 9, the illustration of the gripping unit 70 and the like is omitted to simplify the drawings). Hereinafter, the structure and the like of the pillar unit 10, the first slider 30, the second slider 20, the main arm

40, the sub arm 50, the joint unit 60, the rotation unit 65, and the gripping unit 70 of the Scott Russell mechanism device 1 are described.

[0057] The pillar unit 10 illustrated in, for example, FIGS. 2, 6 and 7, is provided with linear slide guide rails 11a and 11b on both sides of a front face side thereof where the main arm 40 and the sub arm 50 are positioned, in a substantially whole range of height of the pillar unit 10. Moreover, the pillar unit 10 is arranged with a first ball screw 12 and a second ball screw 14 in parallel to the Y-axis, inward of the slide guide rails 11a and 11b. The first ball screw 12 is for linear movement of the first slider 30 and the second ball screw 14 is for linear movement of the second slider 20. In this embodiment, a moving amount of the second slider 20 is specified to be larger than that of the first slider 30, and therefore, a screw shaft length of the second ball screw 14 is set longer than that of the first ball screw 12 (by approximately three times in this embodiment). In order to prevent an increase of the height dimension of the pillar unit 10, both of the ball screws 12 and 14 are arranged to overlap in the Y-axis and a plurality of plates are displaced from each other and intervene (offset) in the connection between the sliders 30 and 20 as described later, so that the first slider 30 and the second slider 20 can be positioned in line in the Y-axis direction.

[0058] Further, as illustrated in FIGS. 6 and 7, the first motor M1 is coupled to a lower end of the first ball screw 12 and the second motor M2 is coupled to a lower end of the second ball screw 14. By driving these motors M1 and M2, the first ball screw 12 and the second ball screw 14 can rotate to either one of a clockwise rotational direction and counterclockwise rotational direction.

[0059] Moreover, the first ball screw 12 is fitted with a ball screw nut 13 partially having a cylindrical shape (see FIG. 6), and the ball screw nut 13 moves along the Y-axis direction by the rotation of the first ball screw 12.

[0060] The ball screw nut 13 is engaged with a coupling bracket 34 of the first slider 30, and the coupling bracket 34 is attached to a slide plate 33 that is guided by the above-described slide guide rail 11a and 11b to move linearly (see FIGS. 2, 6 and 7). Further, as for the first slider 30, the bracket plate 32 is attached substantially in parallel to the slide plate 33 with intervention of spacers to provide a predetermined gap so that the bracket plate 32 covers a lower area of the slide plate 33. Furthermore, the first slider 30 is provided with an attaching bracket 31 for the sub arm 50 to stand from the bracket plate 32 in the Z-axis direction. Note that, the above-described front face side cover 10c of the pillar unit 10 is positioned in the gap between the slider plate 33 and the bracket plate 32 such that even when the slide plate 33 moves along the slide guide rails 11a and 11b, the front face side cover 10c can cover inside the pillar unit 10.

[0061] The first slider 30 is attached with a rotation supporting unit 35 including a bearing and the like on a tip end 31a side an upper face of the attaching bracket 31 (in the direction indicated by the arrow of the Y-axis), and a coupling member 36 on an upper part of the rotation supporting unit 35. Moreover, the first slider 30 is attached with the third motor M3 (corresponding to the pivoting drive source of the present invention) on a lower face of the attaching bracket 31 (in the direction opposite from the arrow direction of the Y-axis), and by the drive of this third motor M3, the coupling member 36 can rotate to either one of a clockwise rotational direction or counterclockwise rotational direction via the rotation supporting unit 35. Note that, since the first slider 30 is attached

such that the rotation supporting unit 35 and the coupling member 36 stand on the upper face of the attaching bracket 31, the interference between the sub arm 50 (sub arm member 51) coupled to this coupling member 36 and the attaching bracket 31 can be avoided, and thus, for example, the posture of the sub arm 50 (sub arm member 51) can be changed to the posture illustrated in FIG. 9, and as a result, contributing in enabling to draw a tip end of the main arm 40 (main arm member 41) proximally to a root of the sub arm 50 (sub arm member 51).

[0062] Moreover, the second slider 20 basically has a configuration similar to the first slider 30 described above, in which a ball screw nut 15 fitted to second ball screw 14 (see FIG. 6, the ball screw nut 15 also moves along the Y-axis direction by the rotation of the second ball screw 14) is attached with a coupling bracket 24, and this coupling bracket 24 is attached to a slide plate 23 that is guided by the above-described slide guide rail 11a and 11b to move linearly (see FIGS. 2, 6 and 7). Further, as for the second slider 20, the bracket plate 22 is attached substantially in parallel to the slide plate 23 with a predetermined gap therebetween by a spacer, so as to cover an upper area of the slide plate 23. An attaching bracket 21 for the main arm 40 is provided to this bracket plate 22.

[0063] Further, in the second slider 20, a coupling member 25 is rotatably attached with a lower face of a tip end 21a (side) of the attaching bracket 21 (in the direction opposite from the arrow direction of the Y-axis) via, for example, a bearing. A center axis of the rotation of the coupling member 25 and a center axis of the coupling member 36 of the first slider 30 described above are positioned on the same straight line that is in parallel to the Y-axis, specifically, rotation axes (pivot axes) of the coupling members 25 and 36 match with a first axis L1 (corresponding to the virtual straight line) illustrated in FIG. 4.

[0064] The base end part 41a of the main arm member 41 forming the main arm 40 is pivotably coupled with the coupling member 25 of the second slider 20 described above. Note that, since the coupling member 25 is attached to hang down from the lower face of the attaching bracket 21, similar to the case of the above described sub arm 50 (sub arm member 51), the interference between the main arm 40 (main arm member 41) and the attaching bracket 21 can be avoided, and thus, the posture of the main arm 40 (main arm member 41) can be changed to the posture illustrated in FIG. 9. The main member 41 has a desired rigidity and is, as illustrated in FIGS. 3, 4, and the like, overall formed into a boomerang-like shape (the shape of the Japanese kana character "HE") by being bent at an intermediate part 41d in the longitudinal direction (and the coupling position 41b coupled to the sub arm member 50 located on the other side of the intermediate part 41d). Specifically, the main arm member 41 is formed as a linear first section 42 in an area from the base end part 41a, which is the coupling side to the coupling member 25 of the second slider 20, to the intermediate part 41d (coupling position 41b), as well as it is formed as a linear second section 43 in an area from the intermediate 41d (coupling position 41b) to the tip end part 41c (see FIG. 3), and has a shape bent at the coupling position 41b so that an angle on the coupling position 41b side sandwiched by the first section 42 and second section 43 is made narrower than 180°.

[0065] About the above-described angle on the coupling position 41b side, the angle is set so that the second section 43 of the main arm member 41 is in a substantially parallel angle

to the sub arm member 51 in a state where the base ends 41a and 51a of the respective main arm member 41 and sub arm member 51 are most separated from each other as described later (see FIG. 9). Note that, in this embodiment, although the parallelism between the second section 43 of the main arm member 41 and the sub arm member 51 is unexact and there is approximately 2° of unevenness, in the present invention, it is defined that the unevenness within a range of approximately $\pm 10^\circ$ means a substantially parallel angle.

[0066] Moreover, the main arm member 41 is protrudingly provided with a plate-like convex part 44 used for coupling to the sub arm member 51, at the coupling position 41b. Therefore, the main arm member 41 is bent at the intermediate part 41d where the first section 42 joins with the second section 43 in such a way that a bent portion of the main arm member 41 detours the convex part 44 of the coupling position 41b toward the opposite side of the side where the sub arm member 51 is located.

[0067] Such a main arm member 41 is formed with a concave part 41f in the base end part 41a (see FIG. 2), the coupling member 25 protrudingly provided downward from the second slider 20 is arranged in this concave part 41f, and a coupling shaft 45 (see FIGS. 2 and 3) rotatably couples the base end part 41a of the main arm member 41 to the coupling member 25. Note that, the coupling shaft 45 is a shaft in parallel to the main arm member 41 in the thickness direction (the shaft in parallel to the X-axis in a state where the arms are not turned, illustrated in FIG. 2) and corresponds to a fourth axis L4 illustrated in FIG. 5. Moreover, the main arm member 41 is also formed with a concave part 41g for coupling to the joint unit 60 described later, in the tip end part 41c similarly to the base end part 41a (see FIG. 2). Note that, the main arm member 41 is secured in desired dimensions in a cross-section orthogonal to the longitudinal direction (each dimensions of height and thickness) so that, for example, a motor, electric lines for various kinds of controls, and an air supply pipe for a pneumatic pressure cylinder, can be laid and arranged inside the member.

[0068] Further, the main arm member 41 is provided with a pivoting mechanism unit 80 on one side face 41e of the second section 43 and the concave part 44 of the coupling position 41b (see FIGS. 2, 3 and 8). The pivoting mechanism unit 80 transmits a pivoting amount produced by the pivot at the coupling position 41b between the main arm member 41 and the sub arm member 51, to the pivot of the joint unit 60 coupled to the tip end part 41c of the main arm member 41.

[0069] As illustrated in FIG. 8, the pivoting mechanism unit 80 has a first pulley 81 provided to a coupling shaft 46 as a center of coupling the main and sub arm members 41 and 51, an intermediate pulley 82 provided to a relatively intermediate part 41d side of the main arm member 41, a final pulley 83 provided to a coupling shaft 47 of the tip end part 41c of the main arm member 41 (and having the same diameter as the first pulley 81), and a tensioner pulley 84 provided close to the intermediate pulley 82. A belt 85 is wound around each of these pulleys 81 to 84. Note that, these coupling shafts 46 and 47 are also in parallel to the coupling shaft 45 described above. In FIG. 5, the coupling shaft 46 corresponds to a sixth axis L6 and the coupling shaft 47 corresponds to a seventh axis L7.

[0070] When the coupling angle between the main arm member 41 and the sub arm member 51 is changed by such a pivoting mechanism unit 80 and the coupling shaft 46 at the coupling position 41b pivots (rotates), accordingly, the first

pulley 81 rotates, the rotation is transmitted to the final pulley 83 via the belt 85, and the coupling shaft 47 of the tip end part 41c rotates along with the final pulley 83. By such a transmission mechanism, the coupling shaft 47 of the tip end part 41c of the main arm member 41 (and the joint unit 60 attached to the coupling shaft 47) can automatically pivot cooperating with the angle change of the coupling position 41b (the pivoting amount transmitted from the first pulley 81 to the final pulley 83 are equal).

[0071] Next, the sub arm member 51 is described. The sub arm member 51 is a linear member having a desired rigidity, the base end part 51a is formed with the concave part 51e similarly to the main arm member 41, the coupling member 36 protrudingly provided upward from the first slider 30 is arranged in this concave part 51e, and a coupling shaft 52 rotatably couples the base end part 51a of the sub arm member 51 to the coupling member 36 (see FIGS. 2 and 3). Note that, the coupling shaft 52 is also a shaft in parallel to the above-described coupling shaft 45, and corresponds to a fifth axis L5 in FIG. 5. Note that, the sub arm member 51 is secured in desired dimensions in a cross-section orthogonal to the longitudinal direction (each dimensions of height and thickness) so that, for example, a motor and electric lines for various kinds of controls can be laid and arranged inside the member.

[0072] Moreover, the tip end part 51b of the sub arm member 51 is overlapped on one face of the plate-like convex part 44 which is provided at the coupling position 41b of the above-described arm member 41, and is pivotably attached to the above-described coupling shaft 46. The sub arm member 51 coupled as described above is changed in the coupling angle with the main arm member 41 by the pivot at the coupling shaft 46.

[0073] Further, the sub arm member 51 is attached with the fourth motor M4 (a pivot driving unit) at a position on a relatively base end part 51a side of one side face 51c thereof (see FIGS. 2 and 3), and a drive output of this fourth motor M4 is transmitted to a drive transmission mechanism unit 90 provided to the other side face 51d of the sub arm member 51 (see FIG. 4). The drive transmission mechanism unit 90 is configured with a drive pulley 91 connected with an output shaft of the fourth motor M4, a driven pulley 92 attached to the coupling shaft 46 of the above-described coupling position 41b, and a belt 93 wound around each of these pulleys 91 and 92. When the fourth motor M4 rotates its output shaft, the rotation is transmitted to the drive pulley 91 as well as rotating the driven pulley 92 by the belt 93, and the pivot of the coupling shaft 46 of the coupling position 41b is driven.

[0074] In a case where the main and sub arm members 41 and 51 having the above-described configuration is defined such that the coupling shaft 45 on the base end part 41a side of the main arm member 41 is "A," the coupling shaft 46 of the coupling position 41b is "B," the coupling shaft 47 on the tip end part 41c is "C," and the coupling shaft 52 on the base end part 51a side of the sub arm member 51 is "D" as illustrated in FIG. 4, even if the coupling angle between both of the arm members 41 and 51 (the angle sandwiched by the first section 42 of the main arm member 41 and the sub arm member 51) is changed, the "A," "B" and "C" are positioned on the same straight line. Moreover, a first distance from "A" to "B," a second distance from "B" to "C," and a third distance from "D" to "B," are all equal to each other. Therefore, even though the main arm member 41 is bent in a boomerang-like shape, the main and sub arm members 41 and 51 are maintained as

the Scott Russell mechanism. Note that, the “A” and also the “D” are positioned on the first axis L1 corresponding to the virtual straight line, and the straight line connecting the “C” and the “D” is orthogonal to the first axis L1. Moreover, with the Scott Russell mechanism, due to the operation characteristics, even if the coupling angle is changed at a fixed rate (the same speed), a moving state (moving speed) of the tip end side of the main arm member 41 is not fixed, specifically, by the change of the coupling angle at the fixed rate, as the base end parts 41a and 51a of both of the arm members 41 and 51 are separated (spaced) farther from each other, the moving situation (moving speed) of the tip end side of the main arm member 41 accelerates.

[0075] FIG. 5 illustrates a plan view of a state where the sub arm member 51 is coupled to the main arm member 41 as described above. The sub arm member 51 is arranged within the dimension of the main arm member 41 in the thickness direction (the X-axis direction in FIG. 5), and the thickness dimensions of both of the arm members 41 and 51 are significantly downsized compared to the conventional devices (devices where both of the arm members are overlapped on and coupled to each other, disclosed in Patent Documents 2 to 5 described above). Note that, in this embodiment, both of the arm members 41 and 51 are coupled so that the center lines of both of the arm members 41 and 51 in the longitudinal direction (the center line L8 illustrated in FIG. 5) are matched in a plan view direction.

[0076] Next, the joint unit 60, the rotation unit 65, and the gripping unit 70 coupled to the tip end side of the main arm member 41 are described. The joint unit 60 is configured with a cuboid joint member 61, and a rear end part 61a is arranged within the concave part 41g formed on the tip end side of the main arm member 41 described above and attached to the coupling shaft 47. Thus, when the coupling shaft 47 pivots, the joint unit 60 pivots. Note that, in a reference state (origin resuming state), the joint unit 60 is fixed to the coupling shaft 47 so that a directional axis from the rear end part 61a of the joint member 61 to a tip end part 61b of the joint member 61 (corresponding the second axis L2 illustrated in FIG. 4) is in parallel to a pivot center axis of both of the arm members 41 and 51 on the base end side (corresponding to the first axis L1 illustrated in FIG. 4). Therefore, even when the coupling angle at the coupling position 41b between both of the arm members 41 and 51 is changed, by the work of the above-described pivoting mechanism unit 80 provided to the main arm member 41, a state of the second axis L2 relating to the joint unit 60 regarding the first axis L1 maintained such that it is automatically substantially in parallel.

[0077] The rotation unit 65 is coupled to one side of the joint unit 60. The rotation unit 65 has the fifth motor M5 therein and also includes a supporting plate 66 supporting the tip end side of the fifth motor M5, and a rotor 67 for being rotated by the fifth motor M5 (see FIGS. 2, 4, 8, etc.). As illustrated in FIGS. 4 and 8, the fifth motor M5 is arranged such that its rotational axis (corresponding to a third axis L3) is in parallel to the directional axis of the joint unit 60 (the second axis L2).

[0078] The rotor 67 of the rotation unit 65 is attached with the gripping unit 70. The gripping unit 70 is arranged to face thereto, with a gripping claw 71 corresponding to a shape of a workpiece as a grip target (see FIG. 2), and such a gripping claw 71 can be opened and closed by a pneumatic cylinder.

[0079] Next, the first to fifth motors M1 to M5 are described. As each of the motors M1 to M5 in this embodi-

ment, a motor with a rotary encoder is used so that an operation state of each of the motors M1 to M5 can be detected using a rotation amount detection by the rotary encoder. Moreover, in this embodiment, a brake function is provided to the motors M1, M2 and M4 in the aim of stabilizing the postures of the main and sub arm members 41 and 51 in a stable state (the brake function may also be provided to the motors M3 and M5 obviously). A motor controller (not illustrated) is connected with each of these motors M1 to M5, the rotation of each of the motors M1 to M5 is individually controlled, and a control of synchronizing a plurality of motors is also performed in some cases.

[0080] For the rotation of the first motor M1, when the rotation thereof is driven, the first slider 30 linearly moves in the direction of the arrow (3) or the arrow (4) illustrated in FIG. 4 according to the direction of the rotation. Moreover, when the second motor M2 is driven, the second slider 20 linearly moves in the direction of the arrow (1) or the arrow (2) illustrated in FIG. 4 according to the direction of the rotation.

[0081] Therefore, for example, when the second motor M2 is rotated so that the second slider 20 linearly moves in the direction of the arrow (1) illustrated in FIG. 4, the coupling angle between the first section 42 of the main arm member 41 and the sub arm member 51 changes to be larger. Moreover, when the second motor M2 is rotated so that the second slider 20 linearly moves in the direction of the arrow (2), the coupling angle changes to be smaller. Furthermore, when the first motor M1 is rotated so that the first slider 30 linearly moves in the direction of the arrow (4), the coupling angle changes to be larger, and when the first motor M1 is rotated so that the first slider 30 linearly moves in the direction of the arrow (3), the coupling angle changes to be smaller. Such changes of the coupling angle are performed by the pillar unit 10, the first and second sliders 30 and 20, and therefore, the pillar unit 10, the first and second sliders 30 and 20 function as the angle changer of the present invention.

[0082] Note that, in a case where the change of increasing the coupling angle is desired to be performed quickly, the rotations of the first and second motors M1 and M2 are controlled so that the linear movement of the second slider 20 in the direction of the arrow (1) and the linear movement of the first slider 30 in the direction of the arrow (4) are performed simultaneously. Similarly, in a case where the change of reducing the coupling angle is desired to be performed quickly, the rotations of the first and second motors M1 and M2 are controlled so that the linear movement of the second slider 20 in the direction of the arrow (2) and the linear movement of the first slider 30 in the direction of the arrow (3) are performed simultaneously.

[0083] In a case where the base end parts 41a and 51a of both of the arm members 41 and 51 are made to be in the positional relation where they are most separated from each other by such rotation controls of the first and second motors M1 and M2, as illustrated in FIG. 9, the second section 43 of the main arm member 41 becomes substantially parallel to the sub arm member 51. Therefore, the tip end part 41a of the main arm member 41 can be brought close to right beside the base end part 51a of the sub arm member 51, and the Scott Russell mechanism device 1 of this embodiment becomes suitable for an application in which it is required to draw the tip end of the main arm member 41 to the side close to the pillar unit 10. Additionally, due to the operation characteristics of the above-described Scott Russell mechanism itself,

even when the change rate of the coupling angle is fixed (the angle changing speed is fixed), since the moving speed of the tip end part **41a** of the main arm member **41** increases as the base end parts **41a** and **51a** are separated farther from each other, drawing the tip end part **41a** of the main arm member **41** to the pillar unit **10** becomes speedy, and an efficient drawing operation can be achieved.

[0084] Note that, the rotations of the first and second motors **M1** and **M2** can also be controlled such that the first and second sliders **20** and **30** linearly move in the same direction at the same speed, and in such a control, the main and sub arm members **41** and **51** move up and down along the Y-axis while maintaining the coupling angle.

[0085] Moreover, the pivot of the third motor **M3** becomes, as illustrated in FIG. 5, the pivot (turning) of the main and sub arm members **41** and **51** in the arrow direction in FIG. 5 centering on the first axis **L1**. Since such a turning is performed regardless of the pillar unit **10** having a heavy weight, compared to the case of the conventional industrial robot relating to Patent Document 1, the drive torque caused by the third motor **M3** required for turning is reduced, and therefore, the turning operation that is smooth and excellent in responsiveness can be achieved. Note that, even if the main and sub arm members **41** and **51** are turned largely, the attachment position of the fourth motor **M4** is set such that the fourth motor **M4** attached to the sub arm member **51** does not interfere with the pillar unit **10**.

[0086] Next, the pivot of the fourth motor **M4** is described. First, even when the coupling angle is changed by linearly moving either one of the second slider **20** and the first slider **30** as described above in a state where the fourth motor **M4** is free and not pivoted, the joint unit **60** coupled to the tip end part **41c** of the main arm member **41** is automatically pivoted by the pivoting mechanism unit **80** so as to maintain the state where the directional axis of the joint unit **60** (the second axis **L2**; see FIG. 4) is substantially in parallel to the first axis **L1**. Additionally, when the fourth motor **M4** is pivoted, the pivot of the fourth motor **M4** is transmitted to the coupling shaft **47** via the drive transmission mechanism unit **90** and the pivoting mechanism unit **80**, and the joint unit **60** can pivot independently from the above pivots. Therefore, the joint unit **60** can swing to pivot centering on the coupling shaft **47** by the pivot control of the fourth motor **M4**. (In addition, when the motor shaft of the fourth motor **M4** is locked, the coupling shaft **46** becomes a state to fixedly attach to the sub arm member **51**, and the coupling shaft **46** is pivoted in accordance with an angle change of the sub arm member **51**. Thus, the pivoting is transmitted to the coupling shaft **47** via each of the pulleys **81-84**. When the motor shaft of the fourth motor **M4** becomes a free state, each unit including the joint unit **60** changes a posture to keep a balance of gravity point etc. in accordance with changing the coupling angle of both arm units **41** and **51**. Thus, the pivot mechanism unit **80** is pivoted accordingly.)

[0087] Furthermore, when the fifth motor **M5** is pivoted, the gripping unit **70** rotates centering on the third axis **L3**, and the direction of the gripping claw **71** can be changed freely. Additionally, by combining the pivots of the respective motors **M1** to **M5** described above, for example, the position and the posture of the gripping unit **70** can be freely arranged, and accordingly, the Scott Russell mechanism device **1** according to this embodiment can suitably be used, for example, in a case of gripping workpieces **W** which are loaded in bulk in various directions on a table top face of a table illustrated in FIG. 10.

[0088] Note that, the Scott Russell mechanism device **1** according to the first embodiment is not limited to the above-described contents, and various kinds of modified examples are considered. For example, the bending form of the main arm member **41** may be, instead of having the shape in which the linear first and second sections **42** and **43** are bent therebetween at the intermediate part **41d** (coupling position **41b**), but a boomerang-like shape in which the entire main arm member curves into an arc to have a shape that a stress concentration is not easily generated, by eliminating the bending point at the intermediate part **41d** (coupling position **41b**).

[0089] Moreover, in a case where it is desired to point the gripping unit **70** upwardly (the direction in which the arrow of the Y-axis indicates), the main and the sub arm members **41** and **51** are arranged upside down so that the base end part **41a** of the main arm member **41** is coupled to the first slider **30** and the base end part **51a** of the sub arm member **51** is coupled to the second slider **20**. Additionally, in a case of simplifying the structure, either one of the drive system regarding the first ball screw **12** and the first slider **30** or the drive system regarding the second ball screw **14** and the second slider **20** may be omitted to have a configuration where only either one of the base end part **41a** of the main arm member **41** or the base end part **51a** of the sub arm member **51** is linearly movable (such a simplified configuration is also applicable to the case where the main and the sub arm members **41** and **51** described above are arranged upside down).

[0090] Further, regarding the mechanism for pivoting the joint unit **60** in cooperation with the change of the coupling angle, in order to automatically pivot while maintaining the state where the directional axis of the joint member **61** (the second axis **L2** illustrated in FIG. 4) is more accurately in parallel to the turning center axis of both of the arm members **41** and **51** (the first axis **L1** illustrated in FIG. 4), the configuration as follows is preferable. That is, the drive pulley **91** illustrated in FIG. 4 is fixed to the coupling shaft **52** located on the base end part **51a** side of the sub arm member **51**, and this coupling shaft **52** is also fixed to the base end part **51a**. For example, key grooves are formed in the coupling shaft **52** and a shaft hole, the coupling shaft **52** is fixed to both the drive pulley **91** and the sub arm member **51** by press-fitting a key therein. Note that, in this configuration, the fourth motor **M4** is moved to the main arm member **41** as described later. By the configuration as described above, the drive pulley **91** rotates corresponding to the pivot of the base end part **51a** of the sub arm member **51**, and the rotation amount is transmitted from the driven pulley **92** to the coupling shaft **47** of the tip end part **41c** of the main arm member **41** via the pivoting mechanism unit **80** illustrated in FIG. 8. Therefore, since the joint unit **60** (joint member **61**) pivots by the rotation amount of the base end part **51a** of the sub arm member **51**, even if the coupling angle between both of the members **41** and **51** changes, the parallel state of the second and first axes **L2** and **L1** is maintained more accurately.

[0091] Moreover, with the configuration as described above, it is suitable for the fourth motor **M4** to be arranged in the main arm member **41** so that any one of the first pulley **81**, the intermediate pulley **82**, or the final pulley **83** provided to the pivoting mechanism unit **80** illustrated in FIG. 8 is driven. Thus, the joint unit **60** (joint member **61**) can be pivoted in two kinds of manners of the automatic pivoting described above and the controlled pivot by the fourth motor **M4**.

[0092] Furthermore, the third motor M3 may also be arranged on the second slider 20 side. Since the third motor M3 basically has a predetermined weight, it is preferable to arrange the third motor M3 in the slider with a lower moving frequency. Further, as the unit attached to the tip end side of the main arm member 41, various kinds of units may be coupled according to the applications, for example.

[0093] FIGS. 11(a) and 11(b) illustrate modified examples of various kinds of units coupled to the tip end part 41c of the main arm member 41. FIG. 11(a) is similar to the description above to the extent that the joint unit 60 and the rotation unit 65 are coupled to the tip end part 41c of the main arm member 41, but the further tip side thereof is different from the description above. That is, a pivoting unit 75 is coupled to the rotor 67 of the rotation unit 65, a gripping unit 70' is attached to a tip end side thereof. In the pivoting unit 77, a first member 76 is pivotably coupled to a second member 77 by a coupling shaft 78, and this coupling shaft 78 is a shaft in parallel to the coupling shaft 47 of the tip end part 41c of the main arm member 41 described above. By pivoting this coupling shaft 78 by a motor (not illustrated) attached to the first member 76, the pivot of the second member 77 is performed. Thus, the degree of freedom regarding the posture of the gripping unit 70' attached to the tip end part 77a of the second member 77 can further be increased.

[0094] FIG. 11(b) is another modified example in which an arm-like joint unit 60' is pivotably coupled to the tip end part 41b of the main arm member 41, and the joint unit 60' pivotably couples an intermediate unit 63 (corresponding to the pivoting member) to a tip end part 60a'. A coupling shaft 62 associated with a pivot of the tip end part 60a' is parallel to the coupling shaft 47 of the tip end part 41c of the main arm member 41. Moreover, the rotation unit 65 is coupled to the intermediate unit 63 and the gripping unit 70' is attached to the rotor 67 provided to the rotation unit 65. In the example illustrated in FIG. 11(b), since, compared to the example illustrated in FIG. 11(a), the orders of the rotation and the pivot are reversed, the range relating to the posture change of the gripping unit 70' located at the tip end is also different from the case of FIG. 11(a), by applying FIG. 11(a) or FIG. 11(b) according to the application, an optimal posture for the gripping of the gripping unit 70' can be obtained.

[0095] Moreover, other than the application of gripping, for example, in a case of applying to the application of placing and moving the workpieces, a placing unit or the like is attached instead of the gripping unit 70. Moreover, for example, such a gripping unit 70 and the placing unit may, if the posture change and the like by the rotation are unnecessary, be coupled to the joint unit 60 described above and, further in a case where the structure is simplified, be pivotably attached to the coupling shaft 47 of the tip end part 41c of the main arm member 41 directly. Furthermore, other than the gripping and placing, a unit corresponding to the various kinds of work, such as transportation and pressuring, may be attached instead of the gripping units 70 and 70' described above to widen the application of the Scott Russell mechanism device 1 according to the first embodiment.

[0096] FIGS. 12 to 14 illustrate a Scott Russell mechanism device 100 according to a second embodiment of the present invention. The Scott Russell mechanism device 100 according to the second embodiment is basically similar to the Scott Russell mechanism device 1 of the first embodiment, but the

main differences are points with the different arrangement position of the fourth motor M4 and the pivoting mechanism unit 80 is omitted.

[0097] That is, the Scott Russell mechanism device 100 of the second embodiment couples a base end part 140a of a main arm member 140 and a base end part 150a of a sub arm member 150 to a second slider 120 and a first slider 130 provided to a pillar unit 110, respectively, and a rotation unit 165 is coupled to a tip end part 140c of the main arm member 140 via a plate-like joint unit 160, and a gripping unit 170 is attached to a rotation unit 167 provided to the rotation unit 165. Note that, in the second embodiment, wiring for the third motor M3 attached to the first slider 130 is drawn outside the pillar unit 110, and therefore, a wiring tube 101 for protecting the wiring is suspended in a U-shape.

[0098] Further, the main arm member 140 is overall formed into a boomerang-like shape (the shape of the Japanese kana character "HE") by being bent at an intermediate part 140d (and a coupling position 140b coupled to the sub arm member 150 located on the other side of the intermediate part 140d), and has a linear first section 142 in an area from the base end part 140a to the intermediate part 140d (coupling position 140b), a linear second section 143 in an area from the intermediate part 140d (coupling position 140b) to the tip end part 140c. The main arm member 140 has a plate-like convex part 144 at the coupling position 140b.

[0099] Moreover, in the main arm member 140, the fourth motor M4 is arranged inside a motor cover 145 attached to one side face 140e of the second section 143 on the tip side (see FIGS. 12 and 13). Note that, in order to arrange the fourth motor M4 as described above, the second section 143 of the main arm member 140 has a wider width compared to the first section 142.

[0100] The output shaft of the fourth motor M4 is coupled to a first pulley 106 of a rotation transmission unit 105 provided to another side face 140f (see FIG. 14). Further, the rotation transmission unit 105 has a second pulley 107 attached to a coupling shaft 147 provided to the tip end part 140c of the main arm member 140, and a belt 108 wound around each of the pulleys 106 and 108. Thus, when the fourth motor M4 is rotated, the rotation is transmitted to the coupling shaft 147 via the rotation transmission unit 105. Moreover, since the coupling shaft 147 is attached with the joint unit 160, the rotation unit 165 and the gripping unit 170 attached to the joint unit 160 rotate. Note that, in the second embodiment, the fourth motor M4 and the rotation transmission unit 105 are both equivalent to the pivot driving unit.

[0101] As for the Scott Russell mechanism device 100 according to the second embodiment, since all the pivots of the coupling shaft 147 of the tip end part 140c of the main arm member 140 and the joint unit 160 are controlled by the fourth motor M4, the automatic pivot due to the coupling angle in the first embodiment is omitted. Thus, the second embodiment has a merit that the drive structure relating to the pivot on the tip end side of the main arm member 140 can be simplified more than the first embodiment.

[0102] Note that, also as for the Scott Russell mechanism device 100 according to the second embodiment, various kinds of modified examples described in the first embodiment can be applied. Moreover, if the fourth motor M4 does not interfere with, for example, the rotation unit 165, the transmission rotation unit 105 may be omitted, and the fourth motor M4 may be coupled in the output shaft thereof to the coupling shaft 147 directly.

[0103] FIG. 15 illustrates a Scott Russell mechanism device 200 according to a third embodiment (in a state where various kinds of covers are attached). This Scott Russell mechanism device 200 is characterized in that a main arm 240 having a straight shape (in FIG. 15, the main arm 240 having the straight shape is indicated by the center line C1 which is a dashed line) is used instead of the bent main arm 40 of the Scott Russell mechanism device 1 according to the first embodiment. The Scott Russell mechanism device 1 according to the first embodiment and the Scott Russell mechanism device 200 according to the third embodiment have the comparable configuration except the part regarding this main arm 240 having the straight shape. A tip end part 251b of a sub arm member 251 configuring a sub arm 250 is pivotably coupled to an intermediate part 241d of a main arm member 241 configuring a main arm 240, as well as a joint unit 260 is pivotably coupled to a tip end part 241c of the main arm member 241. Moreover, a base end part 241a of the main arm member 241 and a base end part 251a of the sub arm member 251 are respectively attached to a second slider 220 and a first slider 230 of a pillar unit 210 (note that, the first axis L1 and the second axis L2 illustrated in FIG. 15 indicate virtual axes similar to the first embodiment).

[0104] Moreover, in FIG. 15, although the illustration of the gripping unit and the like are omitted similarly to, for example, FIGS. 3 to 9 described above for simplifying the drawings, also in the third embodiment, similarly to the first embodiment, various kinds of units can be attached to the joint unit 260, and for example, the configurations illustrated in FIGS. 11(a) and 11(b) can naturally be applied in the third embodiment. Moreover, since the main arm member 241 has the straight shape, various kinds of well-known ones can be applied as, for example, a coupling structure for the main and sub arm members 241 and 251 and the shape of the tip end part 251b of the sub arm member 251 and the like, and the structures and shapes according to Patent Documents 1 to 4 described above can be used, for example (note that, in FIG. 15, a side face 241f of the main arm member 241 is coupled with the tip end part 251b of the sub arm member 251 in a state of opposing thereto, and the sub arm member 251 forms a side thereof including the tip end part 251b into a plate-like shape so that even if the coupling angle changes, it does not interfere with the main arm member 241).

[0105] FIG. 16 illustrates an outline of a pivoting mechanism unit 280 provided to one side face 241e of the main arm member 241. Since the sub arm member 251 is pivotably coupled to the main arm member 241 at the intermediate part 241d of the main arm member 241 by a coupling shaft 246, this pivoting mechanism unit 280 has a structure simplified from the pivoting mechanism unit 80 of the first embodiment illustrated in FIG. 8. That is, the pivoting mechanism unit 280 according to the third embodiment has a first pulley 281 fixedly attached to the coupling shaft 246, and a second pulley 282 (having the same diameter as the first pulley 281) fixedly attached to a coupling shaft 247 of the tip end part 241c of the main arm member 241, and a belt 285 is wound around both of these pulleys 281 and 282. Note that, the coupling shafts 246 and 247 are shafts in parallel to each other.

[0106] Such a pivoting mechanism unit 280 has a pivoting characteristic similar to the pivoting mechanism unit 80 of the first embodiment. Each of pulleys 281 and 282 suitably rotates according to the change of the coupling angle between both of the arm members 241 and 251, and thus, the coupling shaft 247 of the tip end part 241c of the main arm member 241

and the joint unit 260 attached to the coupling shaft 247 automatically pivot in conjunction with each other.

[0107] Moreover, the sub arm member 251 is provided with a structure which is similar to the sub arm member 51 of the first embodiment including the fourth motor M4 corresponding to the pivot driving unit and the drive transmission mechanism unit 90, and thus, similarly to the first embodiment, the Scott Russell mechanism device 200 of the third embodiment can drive the pivot of the coupling shaft 246.

[0108] Therefore, also in the third embodiment, similarly to the first embodiment, if the control on the fourth motor by a motor controller (corresponding to a switch means) provided accompanying the Scott Russell mechanism device 200 is suitably performed to switch to a locked state where a brake function is activated, a free state where the brake function is released, or a drive state where the motor shaft is pivoted, the pivoting way of the joint unit 260 can also be changed. That is, when the fourth motor is controlled to be in the locked state, the sub arm member 251 and the coupling shaft 246 become a fixedly attached state, and the joint unit 260 can be pivoted cooperating with the angle change due to the movement of the sub arm member 251, also, even when the fourth motor is controlled to in be the free state, the joint unit 260 can be pivoted according to the change of the coupling angle, and further, by controlling the fourth motor to be in the drive state, the pivoting state of the joint unit 260 can be controlled as a user intends. Note that, other than the parts described above, the Scott Russell mechanism device 200 of the third embodiment is similar to the Scott Russell mechanism device 1 of the first embodiment, and an operation similar to the contents described in the first embodiment is achieved.

[0109] According to the configuration above, also as for the Scott Russell mechanism device 200 having the main arm 240 that is a straight arm, the total of two ways of pivoting the joint unit 260 pivotably coupled to the tip end part 241c of the main arm member 241 can be switched, by the control of the motor controller, between the automatic pivot cooperating with a change of the coupling angle of the arm members 241, 251 and the pivot by the drive of the fourth motor independent from the change of the coupling angle. Therefore, the posture and the way of pivoting the joint unit 260 can be adjusted to suit various kinds of applications.

[0110] Note that, also as for the Scott Russell mechanism device 200 of the third embodiment, as described in the modified example of the first embodiment, the fourth motor (corresponding to the pivot driving unit) may be provided to the pivoting mechanism unit 280 to drive either one of the first pulley 281 and the second pulley 282, and further, the pivoting mechanism unit may cooperate with the pivot of the base end part 251a side of the sub arm member 251.

INDUSTRIAL APPLICABILITY

[0111] The present invention can be switched, as for the joint unit attached to the tip end of the main arm, to the total of two ways of pivoting including the pivot cooperating with the angle change of the arm members at the coupling position and the pivot independent from the angle change, and thus the Scott Russell mechanism device can suitably be used for various applications.

DESCRIPTION OF REFERENCE NUMERALS

[0112] 1, 100, 200: Scott Russell Mechanism Device

[0113] 10, 110, 210: Pillar Unit

[0114] 12: First Ball Screw
 [0115] 14: Second Ball Screw
 [0116] 20, 120, 220: Second Slider
 [0117] 30, 130, 230: First Slider
 [0118] 41, 140, 241: Main Arm Member
 [0119] 41*b*, 140*b*: Coupling Position
 [0120] 51, 150, 251: Sub Arm Member
 [0121] 60, 160, 260: Joint Unit
 [0122] 65, 165: Rotation Unit
 [0123] 70, 170: Gripping Unit
 [0124] 80, 280: Pivoting Mechanism Unit
 [0125] M1-M5: First Motor to Fifth Motor

1-8. (canceled)

9. A Scott Russell mechanism device, comprising:

a main arm member;

a sub arm member pivotably coupled to the main arm member; and

an angle changer for changing a coupling angle between the main arm member and the sub arm member,

wherein a joint unit is pivotably coupled to the tip end part of the main arm member, and

wherein a pivoting axis of the pivot of the joint unit is in parallel to an axis of the pivots of the main arm member and the sub arm member at the coupling position, and

wherein the device comprises:

a pivoting mechanism unit for automatically pivoting the joint unit cooperating with the angle change by the angle changer; and

a pivot driving unit for pivoting the joint unit via the pivoting mechanism unit independently from the angle change by the angle changer.

10. The Scott Russell mechanism device of claim 9, wherein a rotation unit having a rotor is coupled to the joint unit.

11. The Scott Russell mechanism device of claim 9, wherein a pivoting member is pivotably coupled to the joint unit,

wherein an axis of the pivot of the pivoting member is in parallel to the pivoting axis of the joint unit, and

wherein a rotation unit having a rotor is coupled to the pivoting member.

12. The Scott Russell mechanism device of claim 10, wherein a gripping unit is attached to the rotor of the rotation unit.

13. The Scott Russell mechanism device of claim 11, wherein a gripping unit is attached to the rotor of the rotation unit.

14. The Scott Russell mechanism device of claim 9, wherein a rotation unit having a rotor is coupled to the joint unit, and a pivoting unit having a pivoting part that is pivotable centering on an axis in parallel to the pivoting axis of the joint unit is coupled to the rotor of the rotation unit.

15. The Scott Russell mechanism device of claim 14, wherein a gripping unit is attached to a tip end side of the pivoting unit.

16. The Scott Russell mechanism device of claim 9 wherein a base end part of the main arm member and a base end part of the sub arm member that is on the opposite side from the coupling side of the sub arm member are positioned on the same virtual straight line,

wherein the main arm member and the sub arm member are pivotable about the virtual straight line as a pivoting axis thereof, the angle changer including:

a first ball screw arranged in parallel to the virtual straight line; and

a first linearly-moving unit for being linearly moved by a rotation of the first ball screw, and

wherein either one of the base end part of the main arm member or the base end part of the sub arm member is pivotably coupled to the first linearly-moving unit about the virtual straight line as the pivoting axis thereof, and wherein the device comprises a pivoting drive source for driving the pivots of the main arm member and the sub arm member centering on the pivoting axis.

17. The Scott Russell mechanism device of claim 10 wherein a base end part of the main arm member and a base end part of the sub arm member that is on the opposite side from the coupling side of the sub arm member are positioned on the same virtual straight line,

wherein the main arm member and the sub arm member are pivotable about the virtual straight line as a pivoting axis thereof, the angle changer including:

a first ball screw arranged in parallel to the virtual straight line; and

a first linearly-moving unit for being linearly moved by a rotation of the first ball screw, and

wherein either one of the base end part of the main arm member or the base end part of the sub arm member is pivotably coupled to the first linearly-moving unit about the virtual straight line as the pivoting axis thereof, and wherein the device comprises a pivoting drive source for driving the pivots of the main arm member and the sub arm member centering on the pivoting axis.

18. The Scott Russell mechanism device of claim 11 wherein a base end part of the main arm member and a base end part of the sub arm member that is on the opposite side from the coupling side of the sub arm member are positioned on the same virtual straight line,

wherein the main arm member and the sub arm member are pivotable about the virtual straight line as a pivoting axis thereof, the angle changer including:

a first ball screw arranged in parallel to the virtual straight line; and

a first linearly-moving unit for being linearly moved by a rotation of the first ball screw, and

wherein either one of the base end part of the main arm member or the base end part of the sub arm member is pivotably coupled to the first linearly-moving unit about the virtual straight line as the pivoting axis thereof, and wherein the device comprises a pivoting drive source for driving the pivots of the main arm member and the sub arm member centering on the pivoting axis.

19. The Scott Russell mechanism device of claim 12 wherein a base end part of the main arm member and a base end part of the sub arm member that is on the opposite side from the coupling side of the sub arm member are positioned on the same virtual straight line,

wherein the main arm member and the sub arm member are pivotable about the virtual straight line as a pivoting axis thereof, the angle changer including:

a first ball screw arranged in parallel to the virtual straight line; and

a first linearly-moving unit for being linearly moved by a rotation of the first ball screw, and

wherein either one of the base end part of the main arm member or the base end part of the sub arm member is

